THIS MONTH'S LIST: 68 NATIVENET BOARDS

October 1995

BOARDWATCH MAGAZINE

Guide to Electronic Bulletin Boards and The Internet

Architects of The New WELL
Bruce Katz, CEO
John Cho & David Wu,
Webmasters

The WELL Meets the Web:

And a New Web BBS Is Born

ONE BBSCON In Tampa

The Online Industry Heats Up

The Dvorak Awards:

Excellence in Communications

Hallowe'en On The Web:

Frightful Sights and Sounds

Net-Happenings Mailing Lists:

Interview With Gleason Sackman, Professional Netsurfer

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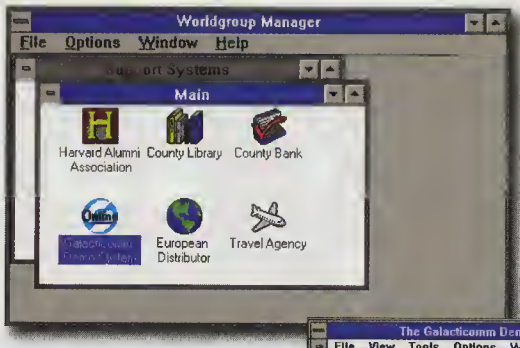
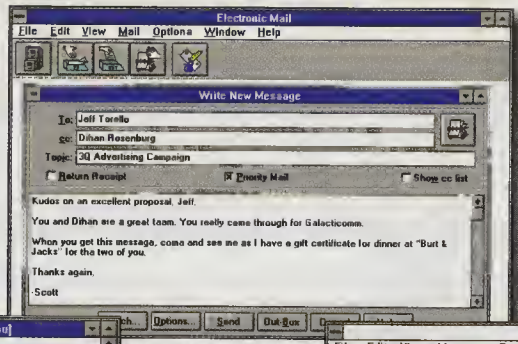
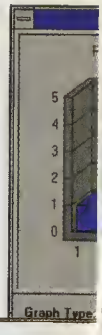


Worldgroup Manager: Users access and navigate your system with Worldgroup Manager, a freely distributable Windows client. With the click of an icon, users are connected and logged in to your system.

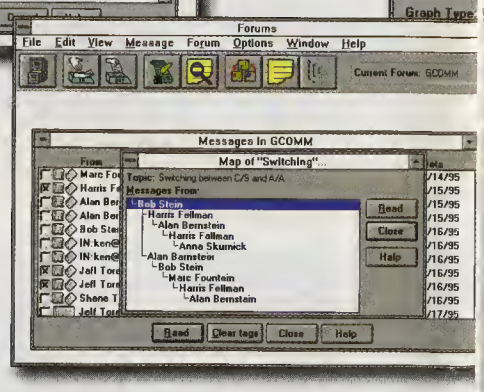


E-mail: Users can easily manage their mail with their own in box, out box, multi-foldered filing cabinet, address book and more.



Main menu: Launch your own online service, right out of the box, with Worldgroup. Offer users e-mail, forums, multi-user teleconference, polls, files, Internet access and more.

Forums: Create up to 10,000 group message areas or Internet newsgroups for users to exchange ideas on a variety of topics. A map even helps users track conversation threads visually.



Open Your Windows to the

Worldgroup™. Bring the World a Click Away.
The newest, smartest generation of online software isn't coming from Microsoft. Or CompuServe. Or America Online. It's coming from you — and Galacticomm, the creator of The Major BBS®.

It's called Worldgroup. And it's a client/server online software platform that brings the world to you.

Think of Worldgroup as the bridge that links the people and resources within your company to the world beyond. With the click of an icon, you can network your entire business world — customers, stockholders, prospects, field staff, distributors, vendors, the press and more — together online!

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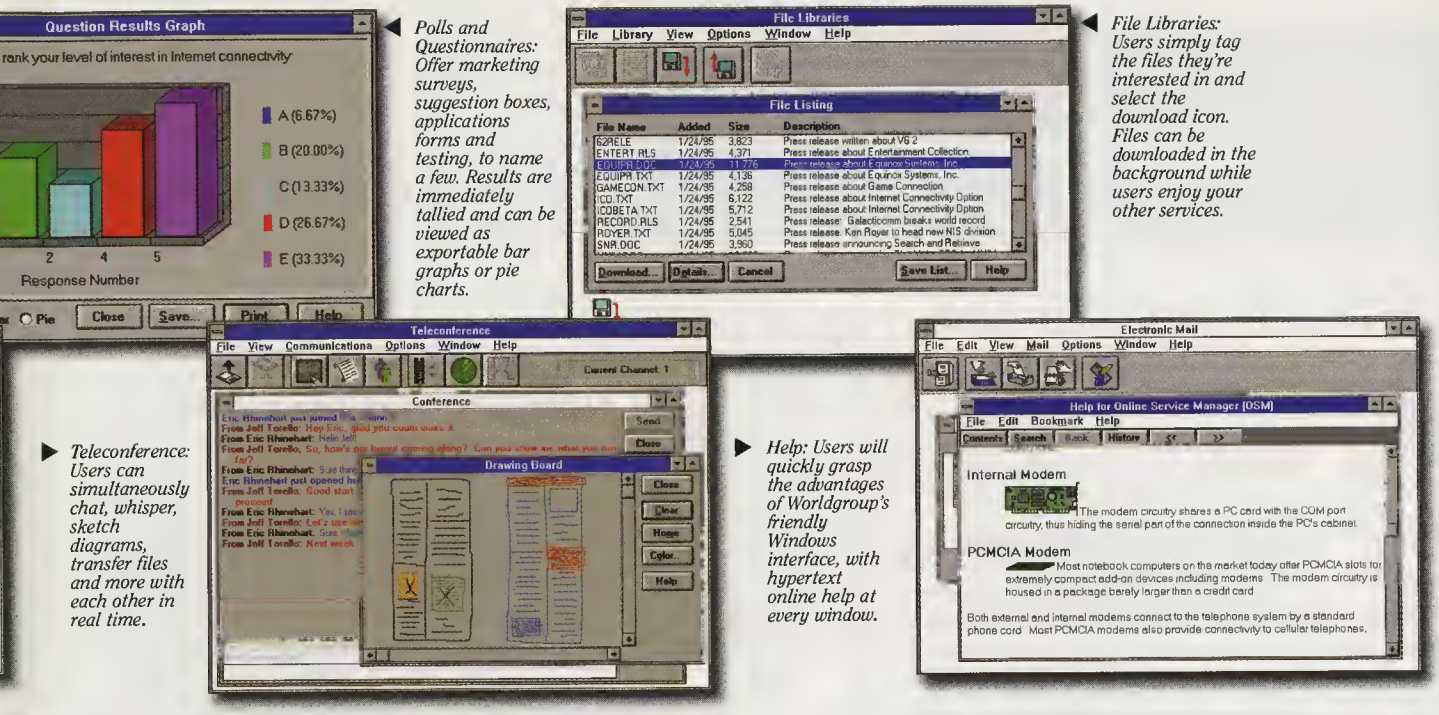
You can customize all the icons and menu pages out of the box. With Worldgroup's multimedia features, you can have a "splash" screen with a BMP image and a WAV or MIDI file, graphic menu backdrops, real-time video and more.

There's even a "launch" client/server utility that downloads and launches files for your users, such as Adobe Acrobat files, Word documents and PowerPoint presentations, in one easy step — while the user is online.

You can use Visual Basic and C to create your own custom client/server applications (we provide source code). Or, just plug and play dozens of add-on applications from our network of Independent Software Vendors.



Polls and Questionnaires: Offer marketing surveys, suggestion boxes, applications forms and testing, to name a few. Results are immediately tallied and can be viewed as exportable bar graphs or pie charts.

File Libraries: Users simply tag the files they're interested in and select the download icon. Files can be downloaded in the background while users enjoy your other services.

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Worldgroup's client/server interface works just as well over the Internet as it does with dial-up modems. We're talking full-fledged interactive applications, not just documents. In addition, ftp server and basic WWW server capabilities are also supported.

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Worldgroup gives you the best of workgroup software and commercial online services. E-mail, group discussion areas, file libraries, teleconferencing, surveys and more are all built-in. You can gateway to existing message systems via MHS or UUCP. And that's just the beginning.

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One BBSCON Photos by Gary Funk

Sysops who win know what it takes.

Eight of the top 15 winners in the Boardwatch 100 run TBBS.

You've set your goals and made the commitment to build a BBS. But hard work alone does not guarantee a win. The best way to become a winner is to watch what the winners do and follow their example.

It doesn't matter if you define winning as making the top 10, the top 20, the top fourth, the top third, or even the top half – you'll see more winners use TBBS than anything else. It's easy to get lost in technical details when selecting BBS software. However, if you focus on giving callers what they want, the choice is easy – Winners run TBBS, and their callers love them for it. If winning is your goal, call (303) 699-6565 for more information and access to a demonstration system.

IN ORDER OF NUMBER OF VOTES RECEIVED BETWEEN JANUARY 1 AND JUNE 30, 19

	TITLE	PHONE	DESCRIPTION	SOFTWARE	LINE
1	Software Creations	508-368-7139	The Primary Source for Entertainment Software	PCBoard	134
2	EXEC-PC	414-789-4360	Largest dial up BBS for shareware software.	Custom	280
3	GLIB	703-578-4542	Gay & Lesbian information, Internet email, live chat	TBBS	23
4	Monterey Gaming System	408-655-5555	Custom interactive gaming and multi-user conferences	Custom	32
5	Blue Ridge Express	804-790-1675	Large files base with 3 Gigibytes and CD-ROMs	RBBS	36
6	Deep Cove BBS	604-536-5885	News, publications, Internet email, shareware, games	TBBS	33
7	AlphaOne Online	708-827-3619	Adults only, matchmaking, personals, shareware	TBBS	18
8	America's Suggestion Box	516-471-8625	13 Gigs of Shareware, Internet email, Usenet newsgroup	TBBS	16
9	Lifestyle Online	516-689-5390	Chat system, adult lifestyles, personals, email	OraComm	74
10	Prodigy Genealogy	800-775-7714	Information and help of searching for people	TFP	400
11	Chrysalis	214-690-9295	34 CD-ROMs online, Internet email, online publications	TBBS	64
12	Pleasure Dome BBS	804-490-5878	Adults only, matchmaking, Internet email, online games	Wildcat!	10
13	INDEX System, The	404-924-8472	Online publications, BBS lists, Internet email, chat	TBBS	32
14	Pennsylvania Online	717-657-8699	Internet accounts, 10 Gigs online, Fidonet IC	TBBS	16
15	Springfield Public Access	413-536-4365	4000 Usenet newsgroups, 8 CD-ROMs, family BBS	TBBS	24
16	OS/2 Shareware	703-385-4325	OS/2 support and shareware files	Maximus/2	18
17	DSC	215-443-7390	Full Internet, Internet accounts, full Usenet	PCBoard	1
18	Wizards's Gate BBS	614-224-1635	No fees, full access on first call, 12 Gig online	SHS	
19	Aquila BBS	708-820-8344	Illinois's largest filebase, message base	PCBoard	
20	Nashville Exchange, The	615-383-0727	Internet, Usenet, FidoNet, shareware, online games	TBBS	
21	deltaComm Online	919-481-9399	Distribution & support for Telix	PCBoard	
22	File Shop BBS, The	816-587-3311	US & World News, Stock Information, full Internet	RA Pro	
23	Traders' Connection	317-359-5199	Largest classified ad database, national access	Custom	
24	hio	216-381-3320	Large message base, shareware, ads	PCBoard	
25	Son BBS	610-439-1509	General BBS, messages, files, chat, email	Wildcat!	
26	InfoService	908-205-0189	Since 1982, online games, Internet email	TBBS	
27	The	703-749-2860	9 Gigs online, chat, messages, games, matchmaker	Falken	
28	Systems	914-667-4066	Internet, Usenet, shareware, adult area	PCBoard	
29			5.7 Gigs, 35,000 files, 100 online games, echos	Wildcat!	
30			Large shareware system, chat, Internet email	TBBS	
			ional 800 access, 10 Gigs online	TBBS	
			games, Usenet, Internet, shareware	PCBoard	
			support, 5 Gigs online		
			files online		

Boardwatch reader's choice BBS list copyright © 1994 Jack Rickard, All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission.

TBBS. The BBS people love to call.

eSoft

15200 E. Girard Ave.
Suite 3000
Aurora, CO 80014

Companies who win know what it takes.

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Winning in the marketplace takes more than good ideas and hard work – it takes the right tools. Businesses who know how to win have an instinctive ability to recognize tools which have that rare combination of power, flexibility and reliability that make them special. Average tools yield average results, even in the hands of a craftsman. But a tool that is right for the job makes a craftsman of anyone who learns to use it. You can identify such a tool when you continue to see it used by winners year after year.

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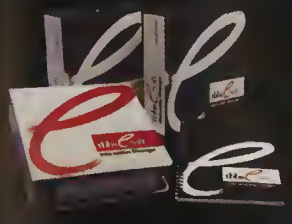
The fact that for 14 years, TBBS has been the choice for more industrial-strength business BBS than any other software speaks for itself. If winning is your goal, call (303) 699-6565 for more information and access to a demonstration system.



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EDITOR'S NOTES

A BLACKBIRD IN HAND

We're in the throes of the now annual post-ONE BBSCON lull in activity. About 3500 attendees gathered in Tampa this year to celebrate the online experience and swap technology and views of the future. The Tampa convention facility was gorgeous though the heat and humidity were indeed oppressive for those who ventured outside it. Some 187 sessions were presented and the vendor floor was the largest and most active ever. Peter Tattam, author of Trumpet Winsock, absolutely stole the show at the John C. Dvorak Awards banquet and very nearly brought the entire room to tears with his acceptance speech. This was his first trip to the United States and the first time he actually got to see a large group of people who had used and appreciated his efforts to bring TCP/IP to the PC community. The concensus among those there was that TCP/IP would not now be appearing in OS/2, Windows95, and WindowsNT had it not been for the widespread deployment and success of this shareware TCP/IP stack for Windows 3.1. And it was the first time an American audience had been privileged to meet this man face-to-face. His acceptance speech painted a somewhat utopian view of an online cross-cultural community that was saved largely by its obvious sincerity and the result was an unusually emotional moment in an otherwise technical celebration.

ONE BBSCON is somewhat radically different from other trade shows in that it is designed as a show-and-tell event, a kind of stone soup of the online community where we gather together a few thousand very focused players from the provider side of the business. There is no editorial theme going in — what happens happens. There are no professional speakers — we had over 200 industry participants get up and show and tell what they were doing and why they thought it mattered. As usual, a couple of themes emerged.

First, the reports of the death of the traditional dialup function of electronic bulletin boards may have been a bit premature. Clearly the developers are focused on the future with visually appealing client/server offerings that operate over the network. But many of the attendees, especially those from Latin America and third world nations, were insistent that they needed low-cost dialup bulletin boards badly and would for some time. And while everyone was interested in the move to the Internet, most reported that direct dial traffic on the bulletin boards was actually dramatically UP over the past year, not down. At Jim Harrer's traditional morning calisthenics survey during the opening session, it appeared that over half of those attending HAVE accomplished the Internet connection over the past year. In fact, we were somewhat stunned to learn how many bulletin board operators from last year consider themselves Internet Service Providers this year and are actually offering SLIP/PPP connections to their callers, larger line connections to local businesses, and even 115 kbps ISDN SLIP/PPP links. The picture we've painted in the past of BBS operators as filling the ISP role for many of their callers appears to have been an accurate one.

Beyond that, there was a tremendous amount of interest in the World Wide Web. But the BBS community appeared to reject out of hand the current level of functionality. They want everything they had on a BBS — but with the graphics and connectivity of the world wide web. Mark Graham and Bruce Katz of the WELL appeared in an absolutely stunning booth to show the WELL on the Web and the result is breathtaking. They have retained entirely the sense of community and quirky coffee-shop culture while building an absolutely marvelous web interface to it. A search engine lets you plow through literally gigabytes of their 260 message conferences, quickly searching for whatever is impressive. All members easily can have their OWN web pages with up to 5 MB of stuff stored on the WELL. The system indexes all of those web pages, creating essentially a new form of community that is in itself quite stunning. We think that after click-surfing through a few thousand web sites that basically present documents, the body politic on the network is going to be looking for a home with people in it and the WELL model is essentially what we pictured.

O'Reilly and Associates appeared for the first time at ONE BBSCON and Bob Denny, author of WebSite, O'Reilly's web server software, was a bit of a hit. The company has enjoyed some success with their WebSite product in the wake of our June cover story and other press attention with over 10,000 copies reported on the street. They moved over a hundred copies of their **$379** WebSite product right from the vendor floor at ONE BBSCON and Denny presented a fairly detailed session on writing Common Gateway Interface (CGI) add-ons for WebSite.

Perhaps most significant was the presentation by most of the traditional BBS software vendors of their vision of the networked future. And it seemed to indicate that while client/server over the Internet was definitely the new direction, the traditional World Wide Web function didn't quite cover it. Most products seemed pointed at going beyond WWW servers toward full online service functionality. Searchlight actually sold a number of pieces of paper promising delivery of a "pre-beta" version of their WebBBS version. This essentially is a Searchlight BBS with all the message conferences, file areas, and user management capabilities they now have, but with a Web interface. Existing callers can access the BBS via the traditional dialup function, while Weberati can view the SAME messages and files via their Netscape or Mosaic browser.

ResNova had in the past done a Macintosh BBS product titled NovaLink. This year they have renamed the product NovaServer Pro and ported it to Windows NT. It's a full BBS package but done in HTML and works as a web server. Alex Hopmann of ResNova is on the HTML 3.0 committee and did a bangup job of describing the current thinking on how to stage new features into HTML a bit at a time.

Mustang software takes this concept in a bit different direction with their 32-bit ANNIHILATOR server for Windows NT. The BBS is actually done in HyperText Markup Language (HTML) and is accessible both by dialup and over the net. But direct dial callers using MSI's client can dial the BBS, view it graphically, and even click on links out over the network to other web sites, without actually ever establishing a SLIP or PPP session per se. Mustang had rented a room and done an entire series of sessions on how to develop for this new product.

Galacticomm presented their WorldGroup product and sported the largest body of third-party developers at the show. Again, WorldGroup can offer access by direct dial or

over the network. American Banking Systems, traditionally a company offering MasterCard/Visa processing for bulletin boards, has apparently gone into the software business with a WorldGroup add-on called MegaMarket that allows you to build a total online mall with sales transactions, multiple vendors, and credit card clearing all built in.

Durand Communications attracted a lot of attention with their MindWire application and in fact won a Dvorak Award for it. Again, this is a Windows NT server product that extends the concept of WWW to include much stronger links to databases and control of those who connect to them. The company has forged alliances with Oracle, Netcom, DEC, and others to allow a scaleable package and has already enjoyed some success with major vertical markets. The Multi-Listing Service (MLS) for real estate listings, for example, is going with this product to present very graphic databases of home listings online. The client incorporates a button for calling your favorite web browser, supporting a weak but flexible claim that the web is in there somewhere, but it is clearly aimed at the need to present large-scale databases online.

eSoft still garned some interest in their TBBS product, but by far the bulk of attendees were interested in the Internet Protocol Adapter. The IPAD basically arms BBS operators to provide full Internet services to their callers, including SLIP/PPP, e-mail, domain name service, and all the non-glamorous functions required to provide Internet services, in a single box that is notably non-UNIX in nature. They had a bundled deal with a new national provider called CyberPort to provide T1 and fractional T1 access at very attractive rates. You could buy a 1.544 Mbps T1 at **$1595** per month in nearly 50 cities with smaller pipes such as a 1/2 T-1, or a 1/4 T1 at correspondingly lower rates. It attracted a lot of interest and over 30 of these links were sold on the floor. PSINet and Netcom were also on the floor and PSINet particularly seemed to be doing a brisk business with the attendees.

Microsoft was on the vendor floor with a very low-key presentation pending their Windows95 intro this week. But Bernard Aboba, of their Advanced Technologies Group, presented an incredible technical session on how to take advantage of the TCP/IP features in WindowsNT and Windows95. And rumors abounded concerning a beta product titled BLACKBIRD. Blackbird apparently started life as a package for vendors on the Microsoft Network to use to develop their areas on the service. But it appears it is evolving to be not only authoring tools, but a client and a server anyone can run anywhere — as an alternative to the web. The client apparently does the web hopping trick just fine, but also allows viewing of more advanced graphics that are rumored to be just stunning. This appears to validate the concept of developing client/server software that goes beyond the web and casts into serious doubt the dominance Netscape had appeared to enjoy over future WWW developments.

The result was that a number of web-centric attendees had come to ONE BBSCON to observe the death of bulletin boards and were indecently smug about the success of the Web — for all of their first ten minutes at the show. By the end of the first day, they appeared gray and shaken by what they were seeing. But by the end of the show a few days later, they too seemed to be celebrating the fact that the web could be extended quite beyond its current limitations to accomplish almost any transaction conceivable.

Another element at the show was the sense that ISDN may become real and that most of the local telephone companies nationwide would be offering it at a reasonable price by the end of the year. Virtually all of the hardware vendors including U.S. Robotics, Hayes, 3Com, ZyXEL, Adtran, and others were showing ISDN adapters. U.S. Robotics has a combination 28.8 kbps Courier modem and 64 kbps ISDN adapter shipping within a couple of weeks at a **$795** list price. According to Adam Strack of USR, a bonding function to allow 115 kbps connections is in the works but will not be available initially. Adtran was showing their ISU 128 that does do a proprietary function to bond two ISDN B channels for a 115 kbps link. In fact, they provided a pair of their ISU 512's as a backup for the show's Internet connection. The show was connected to the Internet via a 1.544 Mbps T1 provided by CyberGate, one of the major Internet Service Providers in Florida. But the Adtran ISU 512 allowed us to make a standard long distance call from Tampa to Denver using four Basic Rate ISDN lines. This provides a total of eight 64 kbps channels, and the Adtrans ISU 512 device bonds all of them together to form a single 512 kbps pipe. We tested the backup quite a bit and found it worked nearly as well as the T1. And it was simple. We plugged the lines into one unit here in Denver and plugged that into a router. In Tampa we did the same thing.

There were a lot of furrowed brows at this show, however. The pace of innovation and change over the past year has been so dramatic that almost no player in the industry is left unaffected. From Lotus, IBM, Microsoft, CompuServe, Prodigy, Novell on down to the most casual, hobby BBS operator, the explosion of the Internet, the World Wide Web, and the almost daily announcement of new products and old companies who are now "the Internet company" have almost everyone terrified of being left behind. I suppose this is because the blast of change has disrupted the hierarchical pecking order of the entire computer industry, and no one knows where they will be positioned when the dust settles. I suppose Netscape COULD unseat Microsoft, Lotus, and Novell in this environment. On the other hand, Bannanacom might do it just about as easily. I confess that it is somewhat pleasurable to see the arrogant humbled and the humble exalted, but it is largely an emotional rather than real experience.

In all respects, the changes wrought have been incredibly positive. The interest from the wider population has never been higher. And the development of a graphical web interface, combined with the flat rate long distance reach on a global basis that the Internet has brought, does not point to dominance by Microsoft or Netscape or Sprint or MCI or anyone else. To me it indicates a coming of an age long desired — where anyone, anywhere, can for a few thousand dollars put up an online service that looks as good as Microsoft Network, Prodigy, or CompuServe, is as accessible to those online anywhere in the nation or indeed the world as Microsoft Network, Prodigy, or CompuServe, and can functionally compete with them on a more or less equal footing. A small operator in Arkansas was unlikely to drop a leased line onto the European continent and establish a local presence there as CompuServe has. But with the World Wide Web, Europeans can reach him as easily as those in Arkansas. Rather than a zillion variants of proprietary GUI interfaces such as WinCIM, the Web's HTML standard lets everyone play on a more or less equal footing. It has had a leveling effect — the great equalizer of the 1990's.

The net effect is to postpone the maturation — and the corollary ending — of innovation in this industry. Tonight some 15 year-old with a compiler can still dream of building a software dynasty. A lone computer addict in Des Moines can still set up a small system with a good idea and a lot of work, and make his fortune selling upscale cigars on the Internet via his web server. And he can genuinely compete with large corporate behemoths based on the content he can generate and the attention he or she can draw. Despite the millions of dollars the large systems can deploy, they still can't "own it" and shut out everyone else. Anyone, anywhere, can in both theory and practice operate a successful online service. It is, quite frankly, my vision of the online world for the past ten years, come true in 1995.

Some days ARE better than others.

Jack Rickard
Editor Rotundus.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Address correspondence to Letters to the Editor, Boardwatch Magazine, 8500 West Bowles Ave., Suite 210, Littleton, CO 80123; by fax to (303)973-3731 or by e-mail to letters@boardwatch.com

PCBoard Write up

I just wanted to drop you a note on an article on PCBoard I believe this month or last month. PCBoard in comparison is very powerful software the consistent problem I seem to have is with the tech support. I called today and asked what I thought was a very simple question, "what software or interface do I use to allow access to my BBS (The Retired Officers Association). I had a lot of run around about how telneting is used in conjuction with the uucp/fido mailer for PCboard when I replied that this is not what I was looking for I was told that Scott would be back in an hour or so and I could talk to him. I have spoken to Scott on many occasions and find him to be "a man with an attitude" not someone who is there to help

I think you have a great magazine, which provide sysop's like me (new) with a lot of very helpful and timely information. The main purpose for this email is just to say that when you publish about PCBoard or any software for that matter, the readers should know about the tech support.

thanks
Keith@troa.org

Keith:

Technical support is probably the largest issue BBS software developers face. Since it can be great one day, on one problem, with one tech support guy, and lousy the next with a different problem and a different support tech, it's a little hard to rate.

Jack Rickard

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Jack-

I just descended upon your office from the moon. Excellent job and lovely images. Keep up the great stuff going on in BoardWatch. I am moving to a remote location in the mountains of North Carolina (big hills to you folks). I will be taking all my back issues and subscribing immediately upon unpacking. If I can't find local BBS or internet I may very well provide it. Of course I would never have thought of undertaking such an endeavor if it weren't for the straight- forward and comprehensive information found in your excellent publication. Equipped with a little knowledge and a lot of gumption, I'm off! See ya' online somewhere.

Benjamin Atkinson
batkinso@gilbreth.ecn.purdue.edu

Ben:

Some days it feels like I've descended on the office from the moon. But in reference to the web site, yes, I think our little travelogue through space down to the office floor has been a bit popular. For those who haven't tried it, check out **http://www.boardwatch.com** *and click on the image of planet Earth. If you have a 2400 bps link to the Internet, this will likely keep you engaged for awhile as it is a bit of graphics gluttony.*

Jack Rickard

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Dear Mr. Rickard,

As Oscar Wilde said "The only thing worse than being talked about in public, is not being talked about," and I suppose that rings true for SPRY, now CompuServe Internet Division, in the case of John Dvorak's article "The Internet Invades San Jose; No Deaths Reported" published in the June issue of Boardwatch.

As a woman who works in the Internet arena of the software industry, and in every booth of every trade show that CompuServe Internet Division attends, I appreciate Mr. Dvorak mentioning how "talented" our staff is, but let me clear up some potential misconceptions on his part.

Speaking in generalities, the women at CompuServe Internet Division are educated and very well versed on various Internet issues. Coincidentally, they are also presentable, but that is not an issue when selecting booth staff. True, we do not have to hire flight attendants or "professional talent" to make our booth stand out, but the next time Mr. Dvorak passes a CompuServe booth, he should stop and ask a woman a question.

He'll notice that she is not "starstruck" by the "glamour" of the software industry (whatever that means) nor does she think that she has hitched her wagon to a Vocational Star. She's just doing her job, and pretty well at that.

Sure we'd rather be called "booth babes" than "fat guys", but for goodness sake, recognize the women of CompuServe Internet Division for their true merits. We are the makers of the product that won numerous awards including, PC Magazine's "Editors' Choice", LAN Times' "The Best of Times", BYTE Magazine's "1994 Award of Merit" and Home PC's "1995 Editors' Choice".

Further, I would point out that, lest BoardWatch be known as "BroadWatch", devoting editorial space to such "retro" misconceptions of CompuServe female employees' roles within the company furthers a very antiquated view of women. In point of fact, one of the key contributors to the engineering of Internet In A Box is Yolanda Chao (now Senior Software Engineer), a woman, a mother and the first programmer hired by SPRY.

Well, I think we've said our piece...and all that without knocking a hair out of place.

Sincerely,
Carrie Miller
Trade Show Coordinator
CompuServe Internet Division
carriem@spry.com

Dear Ms. Miller;

I reread John's article on Internet World — No Deaths Reported. Probably one of the better pieces he's done recently. He rather clearly divied women up into two groups — those in the computer industry and technically oriented, and a new group he refers to as "star struck" by multimedia and the Internet. If you're not self-nominating for the latter group, what's the beef? From my read of it, Dvorak didn't put you there.

Jack Rickard

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From: Rob Wehrli\Internet:
(robzbbs@aloha.net)
To: Jack Rickard\Internet:
(jack.rickard@boardwatch.com)

Subject: Advertiser's Honesty?

Dear Jack,

I've been a reader of BoardWatch for quite a long time. I don't subscribe. I buy it at the newsstand. Your magazine has been a source of inspiration and a source of what's new and hot in the BBSing scene. I really appreciate your call it like it is attitude in your editorial. I read Jack.

My beef is with a software vendor who advertises in your magazine. Certainly I've taken it up with them, and they've done much to rectify the problems. My concern is that this lack of truth in their advertisement, which graces your pages—well, page to be exact, is highly annoying.

Their ad states their product works with the brand of BBS software I use. It does and it doesn't. It works...if you call them seven or eight times on your nickel, sort through the hassles of REALLY bad documentation (they freely admit this!) and you don't mind changing everything to suit their product...that really does work with the BBS software as long as you just don't do this and that and the other thing that they never mentioned until you had to call them again.

MurkWorks Incorporated says that their BBSNet product works with Syncrhonet. Says so right in the ad in your magazine. Apparently, if you were to buy Syncrhonet and BBSNet, what you'd have is a good BBS software that works just fine as long as you don't want to "CONNECT YOUR BBS TO THE I-WAY!"

I bought BBSNet in good faith. I foolishly believe that when they said it works with Synchronet, that hey...it works with Synchronet (you know...the one that Digital Dynamics distributes on distribution disks.) Nope! You need something else. You can see also that the ad says that it also works with Desqview. Ok, it does. But nowhere in their documentation do they explain the changes to an ordinary DV setup required to run their product. Ok, so what's another phone call anyway?

I guess my real agony is when I called Brad at MurkWorks and he tried to blame it on Synchronet. Well, I know that there is a lot of "pride" sysop's carry in their particular BBS product, but I feel a bit beyond that...especially since I'm currently undergoing a Major/Unix BBS changeover. I can't understand why MurkWorks says in their ad that their product works with Synchronet when it doesn't unless you have some other product that is never mentioned until you find that it really doesn't work. In blaming Synchronet, Brad said that he didn't know that Synchronet didn't have an internal Zmodem that worked with a fossil, which prevents the BBSNet incoming telnet nodes from up/downloading without a special fossil-supported Zmodem protocol. Synchronet ships with an unregistered evaluation version of DSZ, which seems not to support fossil ports. I assume that the same Synchronet software that MurkWorks purchased for their evaluation and configuration testing phase for BBSNet shipped with the same DSZ that I got when I ordered my copy. I further assume that MurkWorks' ad indicates that they tested all the features of their software with Synchronet to insure that it "Works with most boards including: Wildcat, The Major BBS, PCBoard, Searchlight, RA, Synchronet Powerboard and other door capable boards under DOS, Desqview, or OS/2 (DOS window)." This statement seems to leave very little room to place blame on Synchronet for not adequately supporting fossil(s) as Brad mentioned to me.

What it sounds like and what it appears to be is that MurkWorks is not living up to their claims, at least not in a manner that is truly ethical. Conveniently left out of their ad is the fact that when using Novell Netware, one must use IPX/ODI on workstations and cannot use the VLM Requestor, which would save about 30k of overhead when loading. Also, there is no mention of the advice I was given when using QEMM...disable the Stealth feature or expect problems. Of course, this is an undocumented feature in many software products :) However finely one draws the line, I point again to the MurkWorks advertisement and say WHERE'S ARCHIE?!

My advice to fellow sysops is that MurkWorks ads be considered rather murky. And, at $325 for a two simultaneous session license...you don't get what you pay for, unless you count all the long distance phone calls to tech support, who are very kind and helpful, but can't seem to put it all on a *#&^ disk and send it out to you. I'm tired of "beta testing" at the retail price rate. Let's get together and make it official that you can't say it works unless it really does when you stick the disk in and type install.bat!

One interesting point to cap this "feature-length" bitch session off...in the "manual" (Draft version .09A) that was included in the BBSNet product shipment—there was absolutely NO MENTION of synchronet anywhere between the covers. Ok, so "works with Synchronet" was a bit under documented. Subsequent phone calls fetched a "Brad worked all day on it" Sync specific set of pages. These pages failed to mention any particular need for any changes to Desqview or any special external Zmodem software. The fact that the product they shipped to me was NOT in any particular form of readiness to work with Synchronet when it shipped in March and to this day doesn't work as indicated in their ad, does not make up for the fact that they are a bunch of nice people who work hard to help out when things go wrong. Things went wrong the second they said that it "worked" and shipped it out to me. It didn't work then and IMHO doesn't work if you have to spend this much time, money and effort making it work while removing functionality on your system to support their product.

Rob Wehrli
Rob's Wanna BBS
Honolulu, HI
(204.188.89.18 as long as you don't wanna download!)
FidoNet 1:345/38 (Which works!)

Rob:

Thanks for the note on MurkWorks and Synchronet and the difficulties you've had. I know this product has been in development for awhile, and the basic concept of connecting bulletin boards to the Internet is a little tricky. But you're basically experiencing life on the bleeding edge of technology. A lot of BBS operators live there and love it. Others would prefer to wait until the bugs are worked out. I had my own adventure with software development with a product we wrote titled Personal Internet Mail Processor (PIMP). It was a bit of an adventure in that it was basically designed by the group that used it. They would scream and bitch and I would code and the result was the product.

Most of the bulletin board software available was originally designed for dialup access — asynchronous serial ports and modems. Getting it to work over the Internet can be an adventure and some packages lend themselves to this more readily than others. Murkworks has attempted to deploy a common solution across several differing packages — with varying degrees of success depending on the basic BBS package. Explaining the nuances of this in a 1/3 page ad could be a bit of a challenge. My own take is that you've hit the wall with your current package and are frustrated by this. When Murkworks implied they could dig you out of this hole, and then didn't do so fully, it was even more frustrating.

It's an adventure.

Jack Rickard

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WHY JACK IS SUCCESSFUL

Jack,

The reason Boardwatch is sucessful is becasue the articles are short enough to be read in the time required to take a crap. Boardwatch will join People magazine in bathrooms all across the country.

John Hughes
hughesj@songs.sce.com

John,

Thanks, and actually you're not far off the mark. We've even talked about doing a water-resistant print run as a subscriber option. The short stories are a remnant from our newsletter days — tell them the interesting parts, and keep the wit and wisdom to a minimum.

Jack

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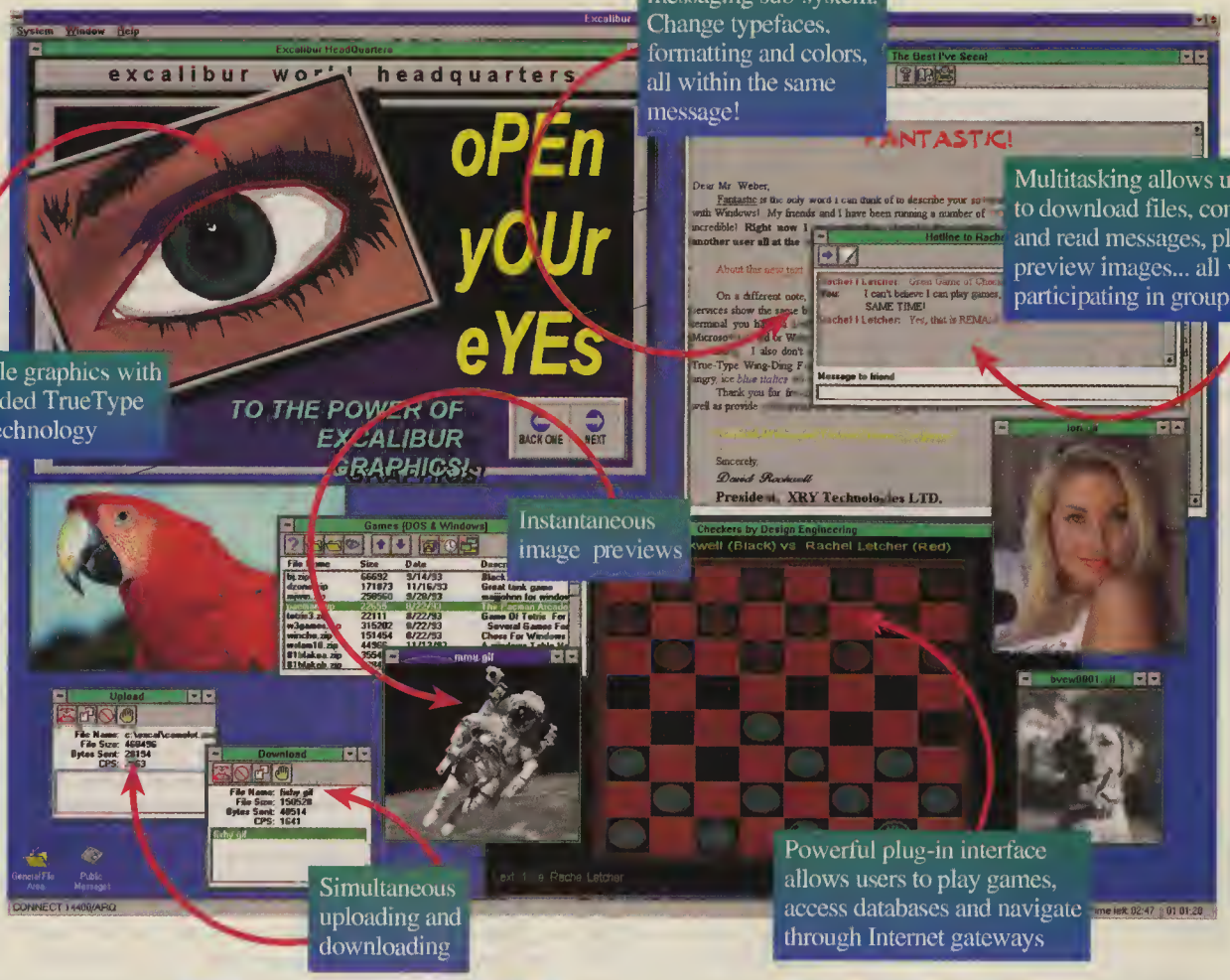

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Excalibur is the bulletin board system taking the world by storm. It was the first system of its kind to run entirely under Windows™ and continues to set the standard of measure. Because Excalibur is built around an accelerated bi-directional protocol, users can upload and download files, chat with other users, and compose messages ... *all at the same time!* Utilizing our proprietary graphical interface, users are able to design their own menus and screens incorporating object oriented graphics, bitmapped graphics, and TrueType fonts. This means no two Excalibur based systems are the same! Advanced error correction and data compression offer reliability and convenience to all users, even those without error-correcting modems.

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AUG 95 ISSUE COMENTS

Just picked up Augusts issue tonight and had exactly what I needed!

The Compleat Internaut's Toolkit.

I have been trying to get winsock 1.0 to work on our Novell Network and having trouble getting it to work with other programs concurrently. I read the article and was pleased to hear that ver 2 supports Novell's IPX.

Thanks for publishing such a great magazine!

Larry Pytlak
larpyt@innet.com
New Port Richey, Fl.
Mystique BBS **(813)856-9681**

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Dear Jack,

First, I suppose, comes the traditional congratulations on producing a fine magazine, but one with a slight twist: speaking as a fellow publishing professional, I am one of limited group who can appreciate the full scope of your accomplishment. Growing an independent magazine to the size Boardwatch has reached is no easy task. The fact that you were able to master the black art of distribution (the eternal bane of the industry) well enough to achieve the market presence you have without being part of a larger house is truly an impressive feat; furthermore, that your tone and perspective wasn't altered by the process is to your credit, and the reason Boardwatch is the resource it is.

Getting John Dvorak to write for you clinched it: John is without a doubt (in my mind at least) the best columnist who has ever written about the computer industry. Whether one agrees or disagrees with his views, his thought, knowledge and vision demands respect, not to mention the slightly more than occasional chuckle.

Now the specific: your AOL section is rather sad. I realize that AOL is rather sad, and that you have no one who is currently covering it for you who would, I suppose, oversee it, but you almost have to wonder if no presence would be better than one that does little credit to you. Just a quick thought.

Best of luck, and may the advertisers break down your door.

Tim Holden
Editor
The Customart Press
sk147@aol.com

Tim:

And a good thought it is. I had approximately the same one. This month AOL is no more in the pages of Boardwatch. We try a lot of stuff. Some of it sticks and some of it doesn't. Actually, one of the delights in publishing is watching John C.'s salsa recipes make the trip and something like an AOL column dry up. Who would have thought.

Jack Rickard

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GREAT MAGAZINE

I just wanted to drop you a line to say that your magazine is one of the best for Internet info I've found. I'm going to subscribe (Monday), since I've been buying every issue for about a year. I work at a software company and many of the developers there (like myself) are just getting into the Internet world. For us, there were many questions about how it all works and what it's all about. Your magazine has provided a lot of information, e.g. your editorial in the July issue was read by almost everyone in the office. (Many of them bought the issue.) I've been programming for about 15 years, and I've seen many magazines turn into primarily advertisements for various companies, you know which ones I mean, I'm sure. But your magazine is informative and takes a stand on issues, and I appreciate that. What other magazine would include Dvorak's Recipe Nook? In short, GREAT magazine; keep up the good work and don't sell out to Ziff Davis.

Sincerely,
Bill Campbell

Bill:

Thanks for the kind words. The question always revolves around "does what we are covering matter to anyone but us?" To the degree it does, we win. To the degree it doesn't, we lose. I'm inordinately pleased we're winning at your office.

Jack Rickard

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BOARDWATCH WWW SERVER IS GREAT!

Great magazine! (Sorry, can't break the trend)

I recently found your WWW server to be a very useful tool when trying to locate an article I had previously read in boardwatch. Using the text search across available issues on-line, I was able to locate an old article about anonymous remailers and dig up the hardcopy for my reference. I just wanted to drop you a line to thank you for offering this service.

Thanks again,

Eric Spaeth
firehawk@winternet.com —

Eric:

The WebIndex function from O'Reilly & Associates WebSite program allows us this full text search capability. I was pretty excited about it. We've always wanted a full text search of back issues — for even local use here at the office. Very pleased one of our readers could find it useful as well.

Jack Rickard

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THE "APACHE PROJECT"

Greetings! I was reading a recent copy of Boardwatch Magazine, and came across an article refering to the "Apache Project", which I believe was being undertaken by TeleGraphix to bring RIP 2.0 to the WWWeb.

I would like to comment on this, in that The Apache Project has been around since the beginning of the WWWeb, as development group creating an alternative HTTPD, based on the NCSA HTTPD, and, as far as I can tell, or members of the Apache Group can tell, has nothing to do with RIP. (Apache was derived from A PAtCHy server).

I thought I would just comment on this, as it seems, from what I have read, the company creating this "Innovation" doesn't seem to have a clue about the WWW, people involved with HTTPD development, or HTML specifications. HTML 3.0 is making allowances for tables, and various other data forms, and hopefully mathematical operations, and it's only going to be a natural development for clients to be able to "draw" based on HTML elements.

Anyways, thanks for your time. If you wish to check out the Apache project, their URL is **http://www.apache.org/**

Aluve, Warren

pyber@coc.powell-river.bc.ca
http://www.pr.mala.bc.ca:8080/

Warren:

Thanks for the heads up on this one. We've known for some years that the online community is "Balkanized" with hundreds of ponds of activity. Often similar names describe entirely different technologies (RIP was a router protocol — now too a graphics protocol?) and sometimes different names describe nearly identical solutions to the same problem. It is always a struggle to build information bridges between the various camps, but the theory is that if everyone has a different piece of the puzzle, some of the pieces might fit.

Jack Rickard

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IBM CRIES UNCLE...

Today's biz section of the NY Times (8/1/95) includes an article where the prez of IBM officially admitted that OS/2 has lost the desktop wars. Analysts also reminded IBM that WinNT Server will probably overtake OS/2 Lan Server (which once had a 2 to 1 lead over WinNT Server) by the end of the year.

With Apple's market share down to less than 7% (down from 10% and dropping), your prediction of Apple going bankrupt or being sold within the next 5 to 10 years is not as far fetched as some MacHeads think.

Looks like the Redmond boys will add a few more billion coconuts to their coffers.

mgonzal@mvsb.nycenet.edu

Mgonzal:

John C. and I have had a running battle about OS/2 and WindowsNT for some time. I've won in these kinds of speculative debates, and I've lost in these debates. Winning is good.

Jack Rickard

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SUBJECT: OFFLINE COMMUNICATIONS

I am cheap. I do all of my Compuserve communications using an offline reader (Golden Compass), and all of my BBSing is using a .QWK reader (MR/2). I don't use the internet much because I am way to cheap to browse on my nickle (especially at modem speeds).

I wish that BBSs would make it simpler for people to use them off-line. I have complicated scripts which log me on, upload any replies, download new messages, and log me off. If the sysop changes a prompt, my script breaks. If the sysop adds a forum, I don't know about it. If the sysop adds new files, I don't know about it. I haven't seen any offline games, but many games take so much time that players lock up the phone line for 30 minutes while moving all of their space ships.

Point software can do this, why don't they (bbs software authors) simplify off-line usage for everybody to free up their phone lines for the next user?

Other question: How common are BBSs which recognize the phone you are using to speed up the login process? I only recently became aware of this option when one of my local boards (OS2SOURCE) added it.

Howard Brazee
brazee@ibm.net

Howard:

You want your mail on YOUR system — not someone else's. And you want it cheap. And you want it easy to use. Howard, you are a quintessential Internaut who has simply not discovered the Internet yet. And you're probably not alone.

*The BBS community continued with this caller abuse far beyond an excusable time frame. Zmodem/xmodem/ymodem? Stop bits? Start bits? Scripts? Give it a rest. I use E-mail Connection which goes out and gets my mail at some periodic schedule I'm no longer even familiar with. E-mail shows up on my machine. USENET newsgroups are viewed from my browser. There are new ones all the time. I don't "logon" to the news server or really know much about it. And even when you contact a web site, you're not really "on" it. You hit it, get a document, and you're gone. I'm seeing flat rate Internet services for 28.8 kbps dialup at **$15** per month. You don't need to ever pay a long distance telephone bill again.*

These are some of the reasons our coverage of the Internet and the Web have expanded dramatically. And it's part of the reason we don't do much on QWK mail anymore. The Internet is better/faster/cheaper and for most of us much simpler as well. But a lot of you guys just haven't gotten the word yet.

Jack Rickard

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OS/2 WARP AND INTERNETMCI

Jack,

No more Darkstar letters from me! I'm having the charge removed! :) I have two FYI items to write about for your perusal. Just a warning that this will be a pretty long email...

Os/2 Warp

After seeing an impressive demo at a local trade show I decided to pick Warp up. 2.1 was ok, but was ditched a long time ago because it was too slow on my old 386. I was picking up a 486dx2-66 with 16Mb of RAM, so I figured Warp would run very nicely on this machine.

I took the base machine install of DOS 6.22 and Windows 3.1, added my CD-ROM and sound card drivers to the startup files, and rebooted with disk 1 in the drive. After 30 seconds or so I put disk 2 in and the CD-ROM in. Warp copied/installed/and did it's thing. It found my cd-rom and sound card with no problems at all. About 15 minutes later I had a full copy of Warp on my drive, and I went about installing the Bonus Pak. The manual for the Bonuspak covered installation only, and the help files seemed to contain all the information that I WASN'T looking for! I was mainly interested in faxworks and the internet software. After finding PPP.ZIP on ftp.cdrom.com via my shell account using Telemate/DOS I was up and running with PPP on the internet! (problems to follow...)

When the day was done I shutdown the system and powered it off. The next day I powered it on and the sound card driver installation gave me errors. Since the CD-ROM was on the sound card, it didn't initialize either. I passed this up not really worrying, and ended up dual booting back to DOS for some gaming. When I booted back to Warp the sound card drivers initialized just fine. For the next month all I had to do was boot to DOS then Warp and the sound card worked.

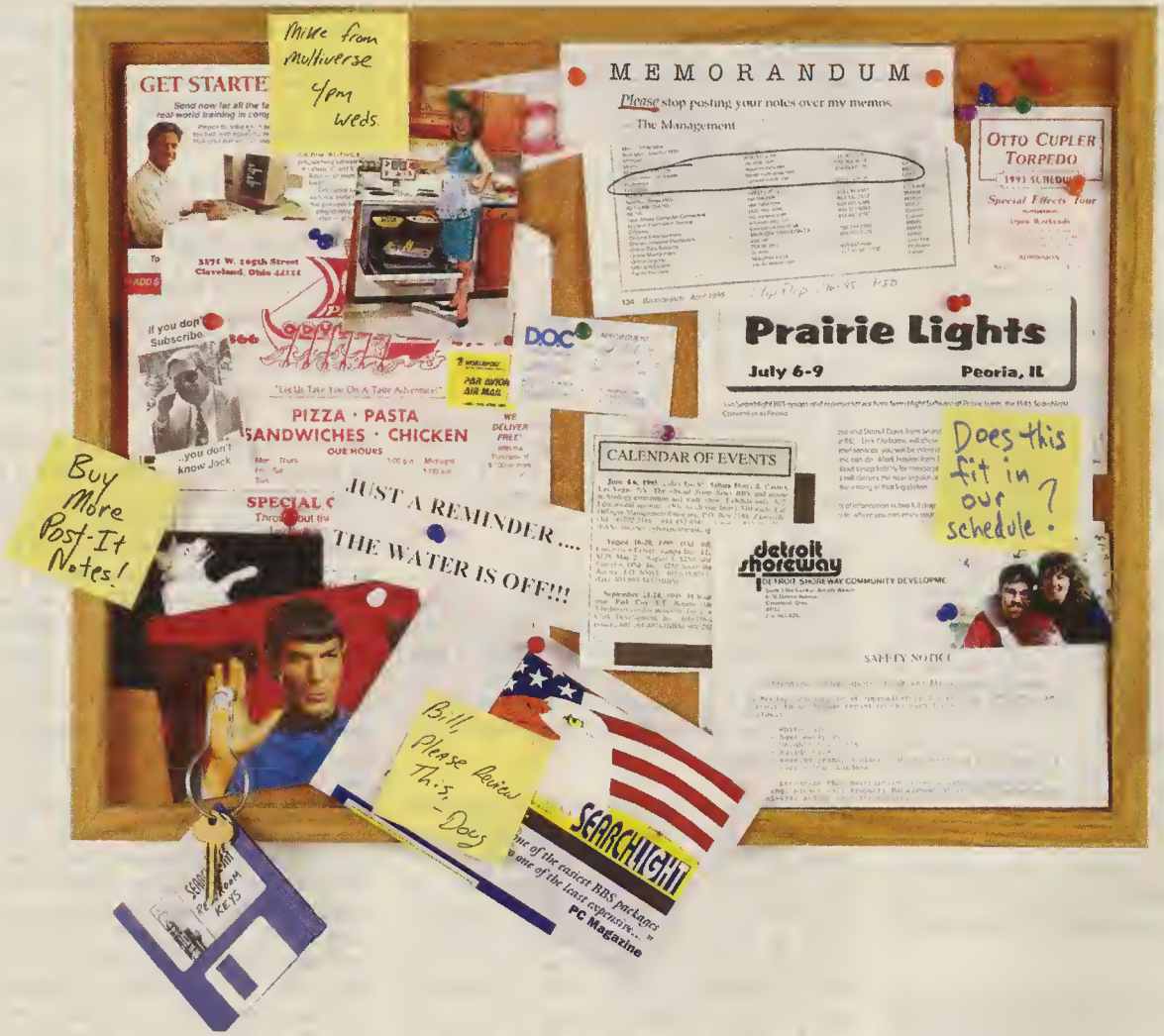
I started getting some errors while trying to dial up my internet provider. Basically before the modem could initialize I was getting an error and it stopped the process. I called Warp tech support and after listening to how I should change the init string, I told them that the init string never got to the modem. They had me fill out about a million stupid questions (like name and brand of mouse, monitor, sound card, PC, bios chipset and date, my favorite food, etc.), they told me that a level 2 analyst would call me back. I gave them my work number because according to the tech "these guys work banker hours". This was 3 months ago.

In the meantime I fixed the error myself by using a communications driver called SIO (very highly recommended in the newsgroups, and again by me). Well one day about a month later, I think I screwed something up pretty good, because half of my desktop was completely gone. I tried re-building it with no luck. I figured since the installation was so easy that I would just re-install.

No luck. Warp could not find the CD-ROM on install no matter what I tried. I spent 4 hours that day on the phone with tech support, talking to 3 different people. They typed in some of the words that I said, and ran a program that brought up keyword searches and answers. I was referred to 3 different files on the internet to install to use my CD-ROM. I also made a fresh set of install disks 3 times, and none of this worked. Note that the drive worked just fine under DOS, but Warp install couldn't find it. At about 4:15pm CST (5:15 in Florida of course) I was told that it would have to go to a level 2 analyst. I said I had to talk to someone that day, since I had a day off of work and it was the only chance that I had to talk with someone. Of course, everyone had gone home. I was told that someone would call me back. I told them that if I didn't get a call back the next day that I was going to return Warp and go find a beta of Winever! The next morning, I got a call from a level 2 analyst. He was very nice, and said that instead of trying to fight with the CD-ROM install, he gave me a work-around and we would figure out the CD-ROM after Warp was installed. (Basically I copied the entire CD to my hard drive and installed it from there, which worked).

This is when I decided to get his email address and take all tech support correspondence to email. He told me to install one of the three files that the other techs told me to install. I did this, with no luck. One day I tried putting the CD-ROM on the IDE card instead of the sound card and what do you know, it worked! Now I had to figure out how to get the sound card working. Well after about a week of emails, he finally told me that the sound card I was using (a Mozart, supposedly 100% compatible 16 bit sound card) wasn't really 100% compatible and that I would have to call Oak Technologies to get a fix for it. After 4 calls to Oak Tech I finally

If you can use this,



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you can use this.

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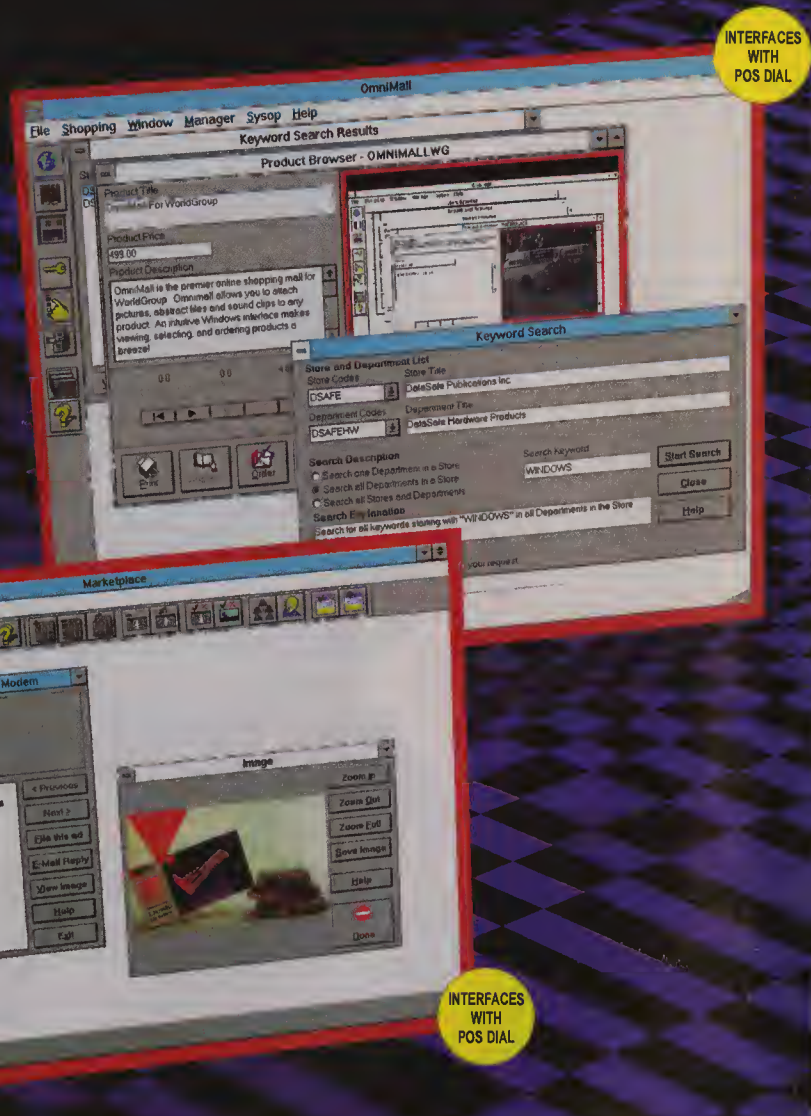

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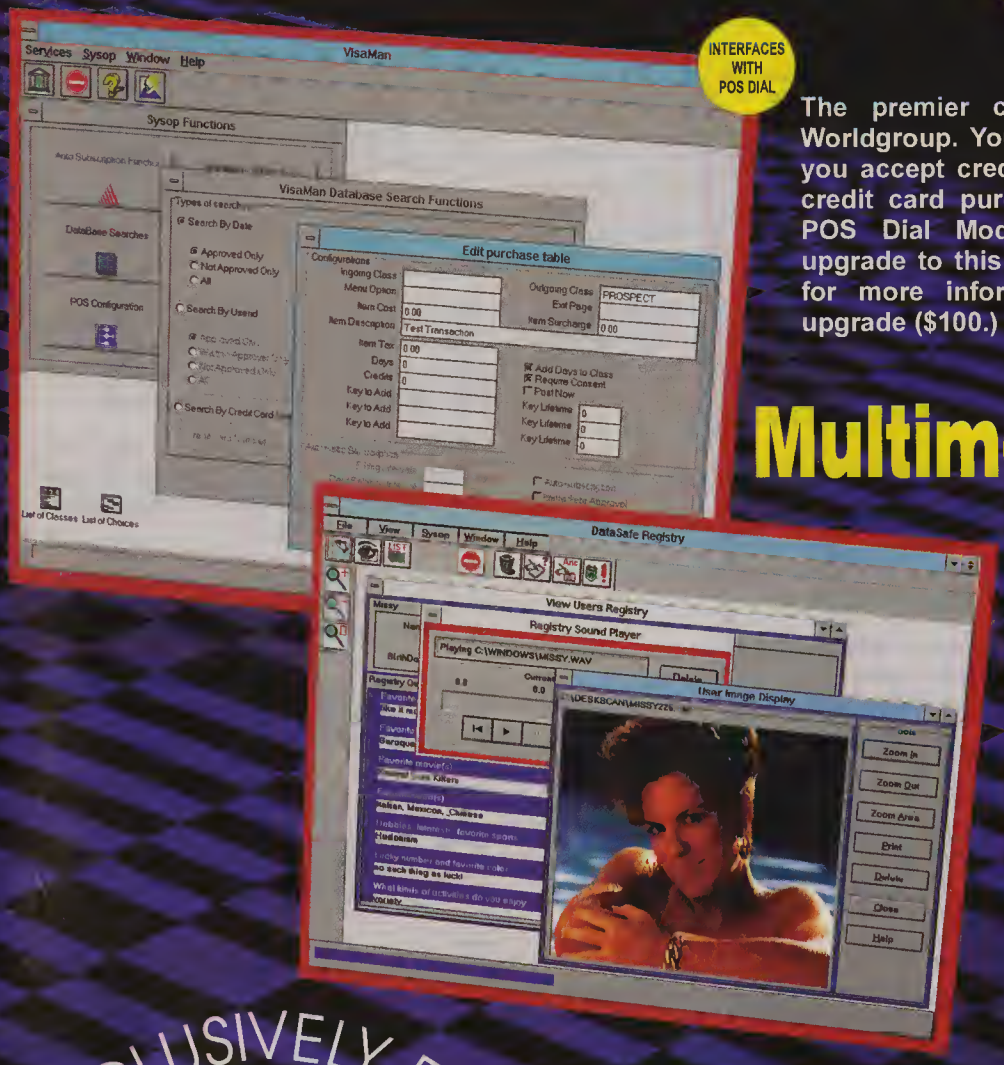

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got a "beta" of their Os/2 Warp drivers. I am happy to say that Warp is solidly working, and I have no problems whatsoever.

Two days ago I got a call from a level 2 analyst in the "video" division. He left a message on my answering machine (not at work, at home) saying that he got the request and was ready to help me fix "my problems". This was almost 2 months since the last time that I talked with anyone from IBM regarding anything at all. I called him back the next day and left him a pretty nasty message saying that if this was IBM's idea of tech support that it's no wonder that Win95, which isn't even out yet, is driving Warp into the ground! I also said that some 15 year old kid living half-way across the world was able to solve a problem for me that 3 of their techs couldn't!

I almost ditched Warp again at this point, but decided that with the internet, I have all the support I need.

INTERNETMCI

Here's another one. Since we do a LOT of business with MCI, my boss decided that getting an internet account through them would be a good move. (Also, through July 31st was free). The install went fine, up until the time to register came up. Unfortunately I have the worst modem ever built, a Supra 14.4k v.32 bis external faxmodem. Also, MCI's hard coded init string was wrong for this modem. It initialized without error correction, which means that this modem will not connect with anything (my dealings with Supra are another 500 line message!). I called their 800 tech support, and after waiting 10 minutes on hold had to argue with someone there that the init string for my modem was not correct. (She kept saying "All you have to do is choose your modem type, it isn't that hard!") Well duh, I'm a tech myself! She put me on hold again, and was trying to find the answer for me. Meanwhile I went through every single .INI file on the drive. In one of them happened to be modem inits. I hung up on them, and tried connecting. It worked, and pretty soon I was using MCI's skewed version of Netscape.

I then tried their email package, which is very feature lacking, and again, is impossible to configure past putting your email address in. After I was done being disgusted, I exited and went about daily things. The next day I loaded MCI's email package, and was unable to get anything to work. I called their tech support and asked if they supported anything except for their own proprietary software, and the answer was "well why would you want to use anything else? Our software is the best out there!".

ARGH!

Adam Granatella
adamg@execpc.com

Adam:

ARGH! indeed. I believe those were my words exactly with an OS/2 experience. All software and services are NOT created equal. We find out the hard way.

Jack Rickard

◆ ◆ ◆

CONGRATULATIONS ON INTERNET ARTICLE

I just finished reading your article on INTERNET (June 95 issue). This must be the first time I ever write a letter to the editor of any publication, much less one to say how much I enjoyed the reading.

For the record, I am a networking pro (meaning I make my living by running a company devoted to the installation and support of corporate networks), so I was doubly overjoyed to read the straight scoop.

I only missed a little more stress on how a universal communication resource has been "democratically spawned", that the old style common carriers could never have developed, even if they'd tried (Which they wouldn't have).

Coming from a suitably monopolistic european country, I am doubly entitled to enjoy the success of the people vs the telcos who know better.

Keep it up!

Antonio (Tony) Giron
Madrid, Spain
100343.361@compuserve.com

Antonio:

Thanks for the words on our June editorial. I agree that the concept of a grassroots driven communications medium should be stressed and that the Internet as it now is could not have been spawned by any major player or players alone or in concert. If that stress was missing, it is with regret.

Jack Rickard

◆ ◆ ◆

Dear Jack:

Love your magazine. Keep up the good work!

I have been thinking lately about a solution for the password-itis we all seem to get mired in as we try to maintain our identity on multiple on-line systems.

It seems to me that a userid/password is simply a mechanism to authenticate (in practice, with plenty of room for doubt) that you are who you say you are and therefore should be given access to whatever you are currently requesting.

As an alternative, why don't we adopt public/private key encryption for this function? For example, an encrypted message that said "Hi! I'm Joe Blow and I would like to log on to system XYZ" might be used in place of the traditional login sequence.

Since the encrypted message cannot be altered and could only be encoded by the sender whose public key is used to decode it, the sysop would have pretty good reason to believe this message is indeed from Joe Blow, and Joe should be granted access based on whatever relationship he had already established with system XYZ.

There are several reasons this would be better than traditional logon sequences. Chief among them:

* The private key, as surrogate for a password, never has to be transmitted outside the user's immediate environment. Thus, it is less subject to interception and misappropriation.

* The same private key could be used with an unlimited number of systems — a practice generally considered a security risk for traditional passwords.

* The public key establishes a stable identity. It would be a good candidate for inclusion in "telephone book" type directories.

So, what do you and your readers think? Is this practical? Should it be done? I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Regards,
Joe Doll
email: jdoll@shell.portal.com
<URL: **http://www.portal.com/~jdoll/**>
— "Joe's CyberPost"

Joe:

A couple of items come to mind. First, it is a bit complicated. Everyone has to use encryption software, which they don't at this point. And the resulting "password" is simply longer, the encrypted message. But the reason that having the same password on multiple systems is that then a system operator can use the login and name you used on HIS system to access another system as YOU. If you use the same encrypted message, he still CAN. He simply copies the message and uses it to login to another system as you.

Your system has the dubious advantages of being more complicated and less secure than simply using a logon name and password.

Jack Rickard

◆ ◆ ◆

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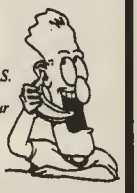

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was a wise thing to do a month before. Last year you moved it to Atlanta, and it was too far for me to travel.

I live in the upper northwest part of the northwest. Port Angeles is on the beautiful Olympic Peninsula, west of Seattle about three hours by car and ferry.

Logic would dictate that you would switch between the east coast and west coast each year. But you chose to go from Atlanta to Tampa. Well I just about had a heart attack when my travel agent told me the lowest fare from Seattle to Tampa.

Having been to many trade shows over the years, I prefer to go to Las Vegas for conventions. My wife and I own a camera store here, and we go to the PMA show each year. Las Vegas has easy facilities, low air fares and low room rates. I do not gamble, but I do enjoy the shows in Las Vegas each year.

Just so I could get out of town for a few days, I went to the Cyber Expo 95. It was small, probably not unlike your first FidoCon. My airfare, hotel, bus from/to the airport, food and even a show cost me less than just the airfare to Tampa. As a Wildcat SysOp, Cyber Expo left a lot to be desired, but I did find that I had done my research correctly and US West is a rip off! ISDN and Frame relay stop less than 50 miles from here (by air, the way US West measures miles for phone service), leaving me with my choice of a T1 or a partial T1. I digress, this is not the reason for this letter...

Please consider next years show on the west coast some where. Of course I would vote for Seattle (Port Angeles only has facilities for about 500...), but after hearing the problems of not enough rooms in Tampa, I feel Seattle or Portland may have the same problem. Vancouver, BC may be a good place or even Bill Gates house (It's HUGE!). But I still recommend Las Vegas, as us poor SysOp's could afford to eat once we got there.

Sheldon Koehler
sysop@tenforward.com

BTW, your last issue looks like Galacticom owns most of your stock now...

Sheldon:

By all reports I've had of CyberExpo, it in no way resembled our first FidoCon — other than perhaps with regards to size. We participated in the planning of FidoCon91, and it was a very intense exciting affair for about 350 people. From what I have heard, CyberExpo had about that many people, but it was neither intense nor exciting. Most of the sessions had about eight people in them.

That said, let's compromise. We'll do it your way. Let's have ONE BBSCON 1996 at Moscone Center in downtown San Francisco in August 1996. We'll use the Hilton Hotel there as the main hotel. We'll do the vendor floor at Moscone, and the sessions in the Hilton, and run buses back and forth the four blocks between them all day.

I detest Las Vegas on almost every level. I seriously doubt we'll ever do a ONE BBSCON there. But it is clearly time for a move to the West Coast.

Jack Rickard

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BARBECUE TIPS — PART 1

Fantastic little recipe nook by John C. Dvorak on "Obscure Barbecue Tips— Part 1. We love to barbeque in Kentucky too using mixed woods including sassafras. Just wondering, how can a Kentuckian purchase a sample of Kiawe wood from Hawaii? Any suggestions?

Love the Boardwatch magazine. The folks from work would like to see a feature on environmental electronic bulletin boards, specifically those dealing with water related issues.

Thanks for listening....

Jeff Grubbs
grubbs@mail.nr.state.ky.us

◆ ◆ ◆

ONLINE SURVEYS

Hello Jack:

I have to say that I'm pleased and impressed with the evolution of your publication. It's been a very long time since I spoke with you. I've been running a BBS since 1979 and am now setting up shop on the Internet — if anyone deserves to be considered THE publication on the 'Net', it is *Boardwatch*.

Anyway, I'm writing to tell you about a system I've developed called SURVEY-NET (**http://www.survey.net**)

It's an automated online survey/polling system that we're just getting started. It's (IMO) a great example of the use of the available technology and use of the online community. With over 30 million people on the Internet, there's obviously a varied collection of opinions and attitudes, and at Survey-Net, we're dedicated to collecting and disseminating this information. The objective of our site is for non-profit demographic analysis and reporting — we publish a variety of surveys on various topics and encourage others to reuse the information. Unlike other online surveys, the results of each poll are instantly available for viewing.

Currently, I have a number of interesting surveys online:

1. A general Internet demographical survey
2. A survey on Shareware users and attitudes towards products & distribution
3. A U.S. Political survey
4. An OJ Simpson Poll (which ironically, has more respondants than the others — I guess that's a disappointing indication that the net is moving along the same lines as traditional media...)

I would value your input in helping us create additional questionaires — if there is any information you would like to find out about the community, or want to sponsor a public or private questionaire, let me know. I'm planning on putting up a religious questionaire, and some additional political surveys. And of course, if you feel the system is worth mentioning in your magazine, that would certainly help our efforts — after all, the quality of the information is only as good as the level of traffic we can attract to our site. Once again, thanks for maintaining such a wonderful publication. I agree completely with your commentary on the CoS — keep up the good work!

Sincerely,
Mike Perry
Progressive Computer Services, Inc.
wisdom@wisdom.com
http://www.wisdom.com/pcs/

Mike:

I proposed a number of years ago a network of bulletin boards that pooled survey responses and posted the results on the bulletin boards much after the fashion of echoed message conferences. The problem was not precisely technical, but a matter of who wrote the surveys. Interesting surveys are of course fascinating and dull ones, by definition, are dull. There are a lot of things I'd like to find out about the online community. We'll take a look at your system.

Jack Rickard

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COOL STUFF

Jack, check this out. Its a searchable WWW dictionary of 4000 computer terms. It's incredible.

http://wombat.doc.ic.ac.uk/

http://wombat.doc.ic.ac.uk/foldoc/contents.html

Brian Simpson
brian.simpson@t8000.com
BBS: **(403) 246-4487**

◆ ◆ ◆

Brian:

It is indeed. So much so, that we've added pointers to it from our own web site. The dictionary is up to about 8000 computer terms now and we've not been able to stump it easily on any topic related to personal computers. Truly a web resource. Thanks again for the pointer.

Jack Rickard

◆ ◆ ◆

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Users can preview graphic images from CD-ROM, hard drive or any other mountable volume.

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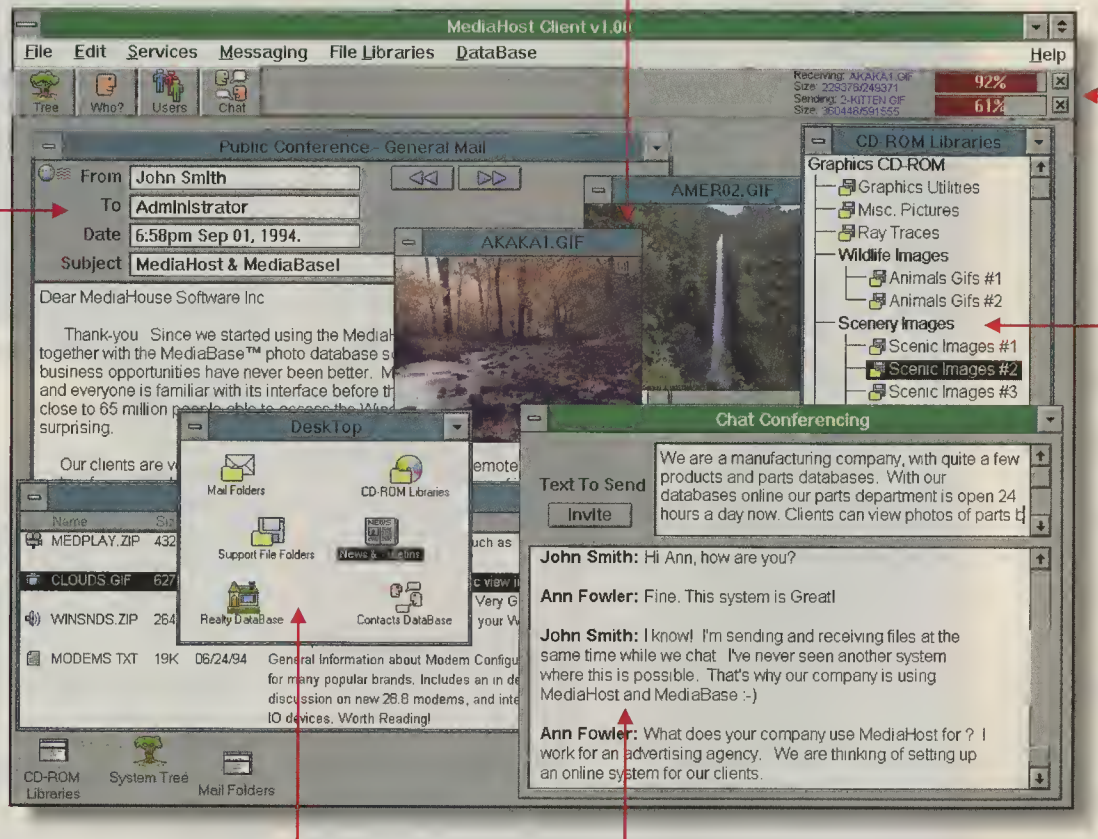

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Online Server for Windows™

MediaHouse Software Inc.
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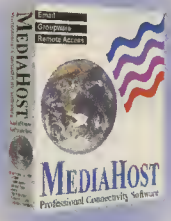
Demo System 819-682-3330
Fax 819-685-0994



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- Ordering and sales interface.

InterNet Option Coming Soon!

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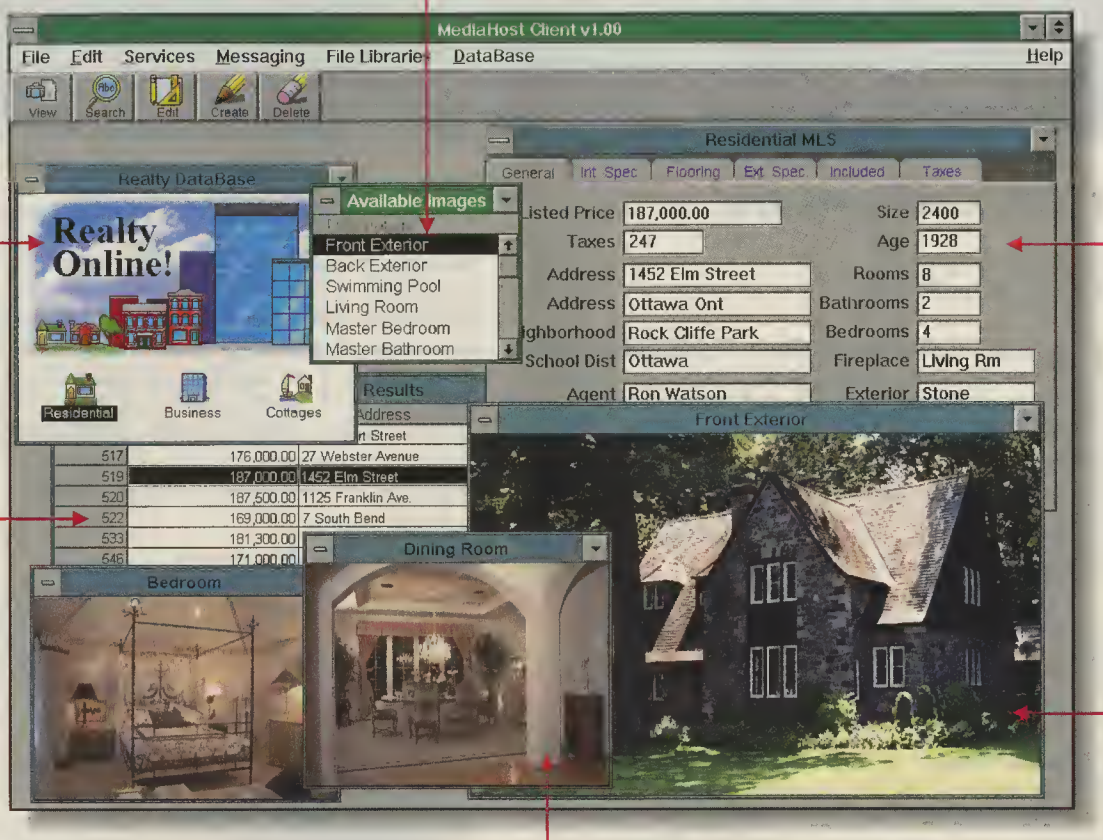
...and You Want to Put Your Databases Online.

Custom database menus are easily created in the MediaHost Visual Designers and Icon Editor.

Up to fifteen images or text files can be displayed for each record in the database. MediaBase also supports memo fields.

Custom templates can be created to display database records. You decide what fields your clients can view.



Databases and query results are displayed in a spread sheet view which is used to quickly browse through records.

Images are sent seamlessly in the background using the MediaHost bi-directional protocol.

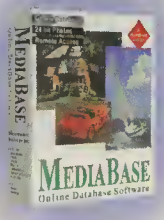
MediaBase offers support for multiple high quality 24 bit images, for each record in the database.

MEDIABASE

Database Option for MediaHost

MediaHouse Software Inc.
32 Eardley Road,
Aylmer, Quebec,
Canada J9H 7A3

Sales & Info 819-682-9737
Demo System 819-682-3330
Fax 819-685-0994



- Reads/writes dBASE®, FoxPro® and Clipper® files.
- Can display JPEG, CMP, TIFF and GIF™ images.
- Allows multiple image and document files per entry.
- Allows security based entry and editing of records.
- Background searches allows viewing of data as it is found.
- Intuitive spread sheet view.
- Supports multiple databases.
- Configurable spread sheets, templates and queries.
- Configurable multi-key searches.
- Integrates with MediaHost ordering interface.

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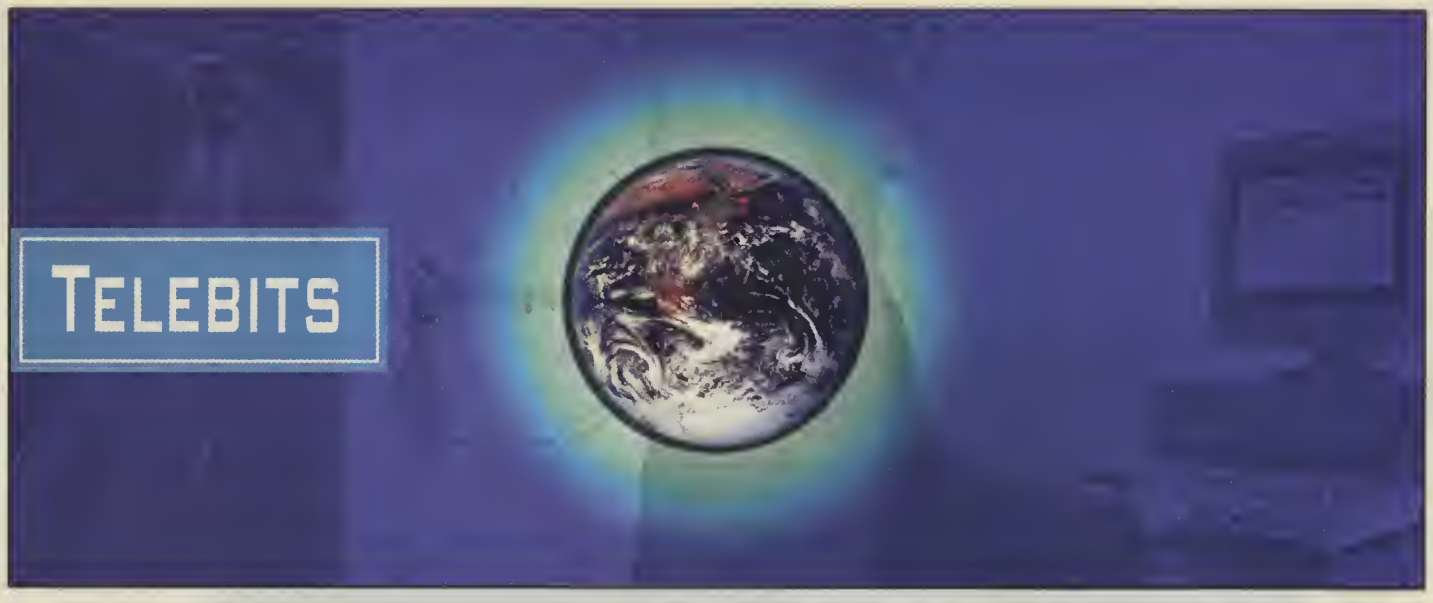

TECHNOLOGY UPDATES

By Jim Thompson
Western News Service

Logitech's ***FotoMan Pixtura*** 24-Bit Color Digital Camera is now available as a retail product at a list price of **$995**. With ***PhotoEnhancer(TM)*** and ***PhotoNow!(TM)*** software from PictureWorks included in the retail package, FotoMan Pixtura offers affordable visual communication for a variety of uses, including presentations, desktop publishing, image databases, ID cards, electronic mail, field operations, and inventory records.

According to Logitech, "FotoMan Pixtura features the highest resolution, the longest battery life, and the largest picture capacity of any color digital camera under **$1000**." It stores 48 high-resolution (768x512 pixels) or 150 standard-resolution (384x256) images in non-volatile memory. The long-life Energizer(TM) lithium AA batteries included with the camera enable users to capture 800 - 1000 pictures per battery set. FotoMan Pixtura plugs directly into the serial port of any IBM-compatible personal computer for image downloading. An LCD panel display located on the back of the unit makes it simple to keep track of important functions such as battery level, picture count, and exposure setting. With a weight of 1.1 pounds, FotoMan Pixtura is highly portable.

Contact: Logitech, Inc., Amanda Higgins,
(510)795-8500

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Award Software International is shipping ***CardWare 2.5***, a new Windows utility program which brings the benefits of Award's PC Card and Socket Services software to all portable and desktop computer and PCMCIA users. CardWare 2.5 solves the problem of PC Card/host incompatibility and RAM memory conservation. The cost of CardWare is **$59.95**.

CardWare can dynamically recognize the basic internal configuration of almost any PC Card and pass necessary information to the host device. Once installed, CardWare 2.5 uses a unique Card Information Structure Parsing (CIS-Parsing) system to ensure compatibility between any host device such as a notebook or handheld computer and any standard PC Card, including all well-known flash memory, fax/modem, rotating media, and LAN cards.

Contact: Award Software, **(415)968-4433**

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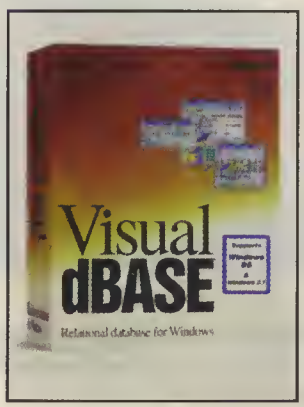
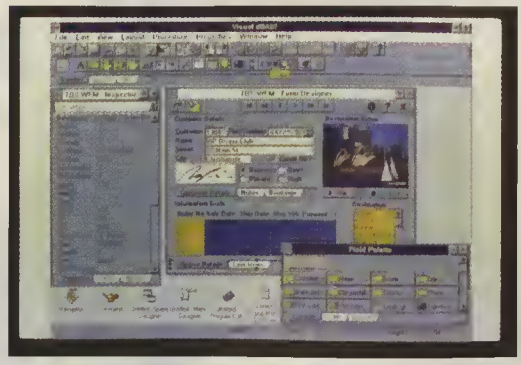


Borland International Inc. has introduced ***Visual dBASE 5.5***, an upgrade to its dBASE relational database management software, for the Microsoft Windows 3.1 and Windows 95 operating systems. Visual dBASE and a separate executable compiler for Visual dBASE developers is now shipping.



Previously known by its code-name, Voyager, Visual dBASE 5.5 is the only second-generation, object-ori-

ented xBase product. Based on leading-edge visual tools and a flexible, yet easy, programming language, Visual dBASE provides business professionals and application developers with the productivity and power to control their data. Besides support for both Windows 3.1 and Windows 95, the database features new productivity tools for users and developers, significant performance enhancements, and robust client/server capabilities. The separate Visual dBASE Compiler allows developers to create and deploy stand-alone .EXE applications royalty-free to users.

One of the most significant additions in Visual dBASE 5.5 is the addition of Visual Inheritance, the ability to visually create libraries of custom forms and controls that can be reused throughout developers' applications. If changes are made to an object — for example, the color and size of a push-button — all applications that use that button will automatically inherit those changes, without programming. This greatly improves consistency in applications and decreases the time needed for application maintenance.

Contact: Borland International Inc., **(408)438-8400**

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At a time when record numbers of corporations are giving employees access to the Internet, relatively few managers of information services are implementing adequate safeguards to protect corporate information assets. These are the findings of a survey by Open Computing, a publication of The McGraw-Hill Companies, and the National Computer Security Association (NCSA).

The study reveals that companies which allow Internet access to and from their enterprise computer systems are eight times more likely to be "hacked" than companies which don't allow Internet access. Overall, 14 percent of survey respondents reported being hacked; 11 percent "didn't know" if they had been hacked, and 75 percent said they had not been hacked. According to these results, most IS managers feel their networks are safe from illegal entry. However, when queried further regarding specific network security measures, nearly a quarter of information managers who acknowledge their sites have been hacked don't use a firewall — a critical network security precaution — and another 22 percent don't know if they do.

Contact: Susan Lider, for Open Computing, **(415)321-2084**, 75213.3217@compuserve.com or NCSA, Tom Kelchner, **(717)258-1816**, 76602.1341@compuserve.com

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Retix has introduced a family of low-priced Ethernet remote office routers that feature a host of ease-of-use innovations, including a front-panel PCMCIA port for field-upgradable functionality options. The new ***ROUTER-Xchange*** 7000 and 7220 Series are among the first routers to support Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP), which enables a router to learn its IP address at start-up and begin routing upon installation. The 7220 Series routers also offer intelligent WAN ports to allow reconfiguration of the router for a new WAN interface by simply changing a cable.

All Model 7220 routers are based on the Intel i960 RISC microprocessor and support IP and IPX routing, or bridging for "boundary networking" applications. The routers support frame relay and X.25 packet networks as well as leased line services up to T1/E1 speeds via V.35, X.21, RS-232 and RS-449 interfaces.

The first units of the 7220 family are available now, and include the Model 7221 with support for one WAN and a U.S. list price of **$1,895**, and the Model 7222 with support for two WANs and a list price of **$2,150**. Intelligent cables for V.35, RS-232, RS-449 and X.21 are also available with a list price of **$200** each.

Contact: Retix, **(800)791-7779**

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Traveling Software Inc. has announced ***LapLink Host***, a streamlined version of LapLink for Windows. LapLink Host will "provide technical support, help desk and MIS personnel with a reliable support tool for PC users — vastly reducing technical support costs and customer downtime. Residing on a user's computer, LapLink Host will give technicians using LapLink for Windows a secure way to remotely run, view and manage PCs running Windows 95, Windows 3.x and DOS."

Support technicians can use LapLink for Windows together with LapLink Host to diagnose and resolve user problems, distribute new software and set up PCs remotely over an IPX network or by modem. The features include easy installation, full-featured security by disabling outbound customer host PC connections, and offering password protection to prevent tampering.

Contact: Traveling Software Inc., **(206)483-8088** or **(800)343-8080**

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(*Jim Thompson is Managing Editor of Western News Service in Los Angeles, California. He also manages the Marlboro Racing News BBS.* CompuServe: 72777,2677, MCI Mail: 321-4127, INTERNET: jim.thompson@wnsnews.com)

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NETSCAPE PUBLIC OFFERING

Netscape Communications Company, developer of the Netscape Web Browser which currently enjoys about 70% of the World Wide Web browser market, completed an initial public stock offering and began trading on August 9. The stock, which eventually reached **$28** per share in the initial offering and raised over **$120 million** in working capital in the 5 million share offering, opened trading August 9th on the public exchange at **$71** per share.

This was an historic IPO. The company only let 5 million of the 38.1 million shares in existence - slightly over 13% of the company is now publicly traded with insiders retaining almost all own-

MMB TEAMate UNIX®

Release 4.0

It's a Killer!

WEB BBS

TEAMate GUI Clients include WWW Browser

TEAMate software now contains an integral WWW browser. This means that you and your users can now mix HTML and other data within your TEAMate Bulletin Board. Forums, download libraries, upload areas, etc., can be in structured BBS format and HTML can be used where appropriate. You can mix and match as desired and even include HTML documents as email or messages. The TEAMate client automatically determines whether HTML data is present and switches to HTML mode if required. From within an HTML document you may also "jump" into BBS mode. This means that if your hypertext link goes somewhere in the BBS other than to an HTML document, the client will switch automatically to display the information, the order form, the threaded list of messages in the discussion, etc., in BBS mode.

Your Server Doesn't Need to be "On the Internet" to use HTML

TEAMate GUI clients for Windows 3.1, Mac and OS/2 support both serial and TCP/IP access so your users can run directly connected to the Internet or with just a normal modem connection.

Since the HTML viewer built into the TEAMate client does not require a TCP/IP connection, you and your users can build HTML documents on your server and view them with the TEAMate GUI client. No Internet access is required to use HTML. Normal dialup directly to your server is all you need.

Worldwide WEB Sites

Any HTML document within your system can "point" to a Web site outside your system and the user will be connected to the remote site. To use this feature your server must have a TCP/IP link to the Internet. The user may be running an async connection or TCP/IP.

Full Text Indexing of HTML

One of the very powerful features of TEAMate is its built-in capability of fully indexing all of the items in the system. This feature is carried over with the HTML documents so that the HTML is fully indexed on content. Your users can do a simple full text search, pull up a list of HTML documents and then follow the links to the information they need. You can add new HTML pages to your system easily and even categorize them using the TEAMate topics, so that your users can find what they need, fast!

Internet Access INTO Your System

If your system is "on the Internet" you can run the TEAMate WWW server module so that anyone can connect to your bulletin board via any standard WWW browser. For WWW browsers TEAMate supports user authentication using the built-in TEAMate access controls plus automatic generation of HTML for those areas of your server that only contain ASCII and graphics. A standard feature allows any WWW browser user to post items to the bulletin board after they "login" via the WWW browser using their TEAMate user name and password. All TEAMate GUI clients can be used on the Internet to directly access your server.

FTP in TEAMate Client

The Internet File Transfer Protocol is built into the TEAMate GUI client. Users can connect to any remote FTP site that you permit and you can "script" the login procedures using the built-in scripting language. Files are transferred directly to the user's PC from the remote FTP site.

Try the GUI Client Today

Call today for a GUI client and User Guide or access our WWW server at http://mmb.com

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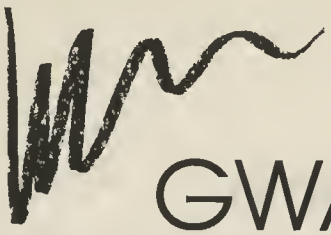

TBBS/TDBS programs and More

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Make extra income by selling classified ads on-line using The Classified Manager© v2.0.

The Classified Manager will handle an unlimited number of classified ads in an unlimited number of SysOp specified categories. Highly configurable, it allows for different rates or even free ad placement on a category by category basis. It allows text search, deletes ads by SysOp defined number of days, allows fors user to preset a list of areas of interest, etc. accepts direct credit card input or permits billing through FAMOUS or (coming soon) User Manager. The Classified Manager can create a text file of all ads for users to download and allows users to upload files and make them available for download from their ads.

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Internet Interface.

Makes no difference whether you run TBBS, Major or another BBS package, we have the package to tie your BBS to the Internet with full bidirectional access from a SLIP to a partial or full T1. And you can add the WorldWideWeb Server and have your own presence on the Web. Ask about our BBS "Swiss Army Knife", a tool for any BBS.

Don't know how to start?

A **Needs Analysis** will provide you with a personalized, comprehensive and confidential report with true costs, scheduling, cost reducing options, service bureau cost comparison and much more. Don't guess at your needs. Call Toby Schneiter at our Chicago office for a true Needs Analysis.

Need Help Setting Up?

Whether you just need a few menus created or a $100,000 custom TDBS program written, we can provide the right amount of service. Ask about our ***three year solution*** — a complete system with all hardware covered by a three-year next day on-site warranty. All software supported for three years

Need a Sysop?

For less than the cost of an employee package, you can enjoy full remote operation and support for your BBS. Or we can operate your BBS from one of our sites. An inexpensive way to test market your BBS concept as there is no need to invest in hardware or software until your concept is proven.

Call any one of our associates to discuss your needs.

● Pete White (Boston) 508-429-6227 ● Toby Schneiter (Chicago) 708-298-6919

● Tom Faulkner (Raleigh/Durham) 919-403-9473 ● John Schachat (San Jose) 408-267-7176

GW Associates offers over 200 third party programs from more than 30 developers and is the oldest and largest supplier of add-on programs for TBBS. Download the latest listing from the BBS. Most programs can be viewed on-line and many have demos you can download and try on your system.

508-429-6227 voice or 508-429-8385 bbs

P

ership of the company. The opening at $71 would value the entire company at a little over **$2.7 billion dollars** - somewhat surrealistic for a company formed from thin air in April 1994 and with revenues so far in 1995 of slightly over $16 million — with no profit recorded ever anywhere.

First day trading totalled 13.8 million shares. Since there were only 5 million shares tradeable in the world, each share changed hands an average of 2.75 times in the first day and closed at **$58.25**. This left 24 year-old Marc Andreeson, who picked up about a million shares at a hundredth of a cent per share or so, worth about **$58 million dollars**. James Clark retained some 9.7 million shares to add to his net worth at the end of August 9th about **$565 million**.

By the end of the month, Netscape (NASDAQ: NSCP) had settled into fairly stable trading in the $45-$50 range with an August 31 close of **$46.75**. NEXT year's earnings are projected at about 17 cents per share, no earnings this year at all. That gives the stock a P/E ratio of 275. A P/E of 20 is normally considered a might high.

The company is viewed by investors as being in a key spot to control development of the World Wide Web. The company is expected to unveil a new version of their web browser incorporating the Java applet interpreter, realaudio sound technology, tool bars, and other innovations to improve WWW activity further. They have entered dozens of licensing and technology agreements with large companies across the Internetscape.

NETSCAPE UNVEILS CHAT, BOOKMARK ENHANCEMENTS

In related news, Netscape released two add-on modules for its already versatile Navigator Web browser. ***Netscape Chat*** allows real-time participation in chat forums hosted on IRC (Internet Relay Chat) or Netscape Community System software, but this isn't just typing "How's the weather?" to your neighbor in the Bronx. A web site accessed by one user can be shared with other users in a chat forum without requiring them to enter a URL. Chat modes include one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-many. Users can participate in multiple chat forums simultaneously. Custom phonebooks accomodate lists of frequently visited chat forums and maintain an ordered list of URLS to faciliate guided tours and presentations.

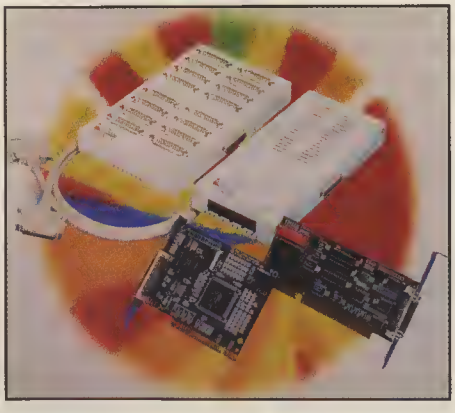
Netscape SmartMarks is a bookmark enhancement module. It can monitor selected Web sites and notify the user of changes in locations, pages or links. SmartMarks is the first application to support a new HTML feature called "bulletins," which lets transmit half-page notices to their visitors when the visitors are not logged on to the sites. SmartMarks also provides a universal point-and-click interface for searches of multiple Internet databases including Infoseek, Lycos, Yahoo! and Webcrawler. Search strategies can be saved and recalled in later sessions. SmartMarks will import existing Navigator bookmark files, allows hierarchical folder systems of bookmarks and comes loaded with Yahoo!'s Top 300 URLs.

Beta versions of both programs can be downloaded from **http://home.mcom.com/comprod/mirror/** for evaulation. Both are priced at **$24.95**; the commercial versions will be available at the end of September.

COMPUSERVE LOWERS FEES

Effective September 10, CompuServe members will no longer pay **$4.80** per hour every time they stray out of Basic Services. The **$9.95** monthly membership charge will include five hours of access to forums, CompuServe mail and the Internet. Additional hours will be billed at **$2.95**. CompuServe: **(614)457-8600** or **(800)858-0411** voice.

CYCLADES' PCI RISC-BASED MULTIPORT SERIAL BOARD



On August 1, Cyclades Corp. released the CYCLOM-Ye/PCI multiport serial card designed for hasslefree installation and operation at speeds up to 115 Kbps. The card uses the Cirrus Logic CD1400 RISC microprocessor to eliminate the "joys" of interrupt and dip switch configuration, provide on-board character processing, flow control and special character recognition without burdening the CPU. The card also supports full modem signals. SCO UNIX and Linux are presently supported; a Windows NT driver "will follow shortly." The card comes with a 30-day unconditional moneyback guarantee, 5-year warranty and lifetime free tech support. The 16-port version is priced at **$499** for a limited time; regular list price is **$1079**. Cyclades Corp.: **(800)882-9252** or **(510)770-9727** voice; **mailto:sales@cyclades.com**; **http://www.cyclades.com**

BIG BOARDS POST 37.3% MEMBERSHIP GAINS

The number of subscribers to "consumer online services" grew to 8.5 million in the first half of 1995, up 37.3%, according to a quarterly survey conducted by SIMBA Information Inc. — (203)834-0033 voice. America Online posted the biggest gain, doubling its membership and adding 1.5 million subscribers in the first half of the year. CompuServe remained the biggest service with 3.2 million subscribers. Prodigy's member base increased 12.5% to 1.4 million subscribers. Combined the Big Three accounted for 7.5 million subscribers or 88% of the consumer online services market in the six-month period. SIMBA predicts that this segment of the online market will swell to 11 million subscribers by year's end, fueled by the debut of the Microsoft Network and promotional efforts of "scores of publishers, investors, software, cable, technology and telecommunications companies (jumping) on the online bandwagon." SIMBA Infor-mation, Inc.: **(203)834-0033**

WEBCONNECT OFFERS CROSSLINK PLACEMENT SERVICE

One of the fastest ways to promote a Web site is to establish crosslink relationships with other Web sites — "You provide a link to my site and I'll provide one to yours." Established Web site owners are beginning to charge money for the privilege of having your icon on their pages. WebConnect, a new subsidiary of Worldata Information Marketing Service, is carving out its share of the pie by offering what it calls the first "link placement service." For **$25** to **$75** per month per link, with a one-time setup fee of **$50** per link and a minimum monthly charge of **$750**, WebConnect will set you up with

crosslinks in any of several categories. You pick the sites to which you want links from a "link card" analogous to a national Yellow Pages directory of advertising rate cards. For example, CocaCola's Web site has a nostalgic theme, so Coke wants links to "collectibles" Web sites. If you want a link to a particular site that is not already in WebConnect's stable, they'll try to negotiate an arrangement with the site owner for you. WebConnect: **(407)368-8345** voice; **mailto:webconnect@worldata.com** ; **http://worldata.com/webcon.htm**

IT'SNEW! MAGAZINE ON THE WEB & NEWSSTANDS

It'sNEW! is a high quality, color magazine published bi-monthly and distributed throughout the US and Canada, and in selected markets worldwide. ***It'sNEW!*** brings you up-to-date information about exciting innovations, new products, trends and ideas which impact the way we work and live. The premier issue went on sale at newsstands around the world in February 1995. It's cool as well as new. We learned about high-tech toilets, energy-saving sulfur light bulbs, the "Dick Tracy" cordless telephone wristwatch, a device that blocks reception of unwanted TV programs, and scads of other nifty stuff!

The magazine has a Web site at **http://cts.com/~itsnew** where you can browse the current issue, search back issue archives, submit a new product for publication, subscribe to ***It'sNew!*** for 6 issues (**$16.50**) or 12 issues (**$28.40**). You can even find a wholesale magazine distributor near you who can steer you to a retail outlet. ***It'sNew!*** Magazine: **(800)333-9345** voice U. S. A. or **(800)786-7115** voice Canada; **mailto:itsnew@cts.com**

BOSS-BASHING WEB TOOLS

October 16 is National Bosses' Day, but some employees may join The Rude & Obnoxious Press in celebrating "Crappy Boss Day." If your boss is "a sadistic, back-stabbing, credit-stealing JERK," the folks at R&O Press will help you get back your own — anonymously. You

Yahoo! developers Jerry Yang (left) and David Filo

can send an e-mail message to them, detailing exactly what you think of your boss and wish for him/her. R&O will deliver it for you, under their name instead of yours. Their Web page at **http://www.NeoSoft.com/~ro_press/ro_main.htm** includes other appropriate tools, such as sound files you can load on your boss' PC while he's at the golf course. Some of the files emulate flatulence, while others invite the boss to commit various biologically impracticable acts. You can also participate in the "Corporate Victim of the Year" contest, or contribute to the ever-growing list of ideas on "What torture is appropriate if my boss is under sedation at the hospital?"

COMMNET 2.1 TERMINAL/TELNET SOFTWARE

While we love the telnet features of *Qmodem Pro for Windows 95* and *Procomm Plus for Windows 2.1*, both programs are a bit on the large (slow to load) side and priced in the **$100** range. An excellent alternative for the impatient and/or budget-strapped is Radient Software's ***CommNet 2.1***, available for just **$34.95**. A demo version is available at **http://www.radient.com** and is fully functional as a terminal program or telnet client. But the demo cannot be used as a helper application in one's Web browser. We tested the purchased version with Netscape. It loads quickly and performs admirably. CommNet supports TTY, VT100 and ANSI terminal emulation (including the nonstandard ANSI sequences BBS operators love to throw at you), and simultaneous multiple telnet sessions. An unusually fast Zmodem protocol works via telnet or dialup connections, and Ymodem-G is available during dialup sessions. The phonebook accomodates dialup or telnet entries. There's a session-logging feature to capture screen data to disk or printer, and a 15-screen scrollback buffer. Macro keys can store userids, passwords, and routine keystroke sequences. Sound files are supported, but mercifully one has the option to turn them off. Drag-and-drop makes file uploading a breeze. Radient Software, Inc.: P. O. Box 61776, Sunnyvale CA 94088; **mailto:support@radient.com**

PACIFIC INTERNET'S WEB-IN-A-BOX FOR $4995

A turnkey Web site solution is available from Pacific Internet for a nifty price of **$4,995**. The Web-in-a-Box product includes a Pentium-driven, UNIX-based server, Web server software, and utilities for TCP/IP, e-mail, FTP, gopher and news services. SoftQuad's HoTMetaL Pro 2.0 HTML authoring tool is also included. Traffic monitoring software is thrown in as a bonus. This basic package includes a 90 Mhz CPU, 16 Mb of RAM, a 16-bit Ethernet card, 1 Gb hard drive, internal CD-ROM, floppy and 350 Mb tape drives, and preconfigured UNIX Internet software. Heftier configurations supporting up to 250,000 hits per day are also available. Pacific Internet: **(310)410-9700** voice; **http://www.pacnet.com**

CU-SEEME FOR WINDOWS

White Pine Software, in conjunction with Cornell University, has unveiled a Windows beta version of the popular CU-SeeMe Internet videoconferencing software. It's the first software of its

kind that can be launched from within a Web browser. The commercial version, due out in December, will be distributed directly over the Internet. Hit **http://www.wpine.com/cu-seeme.html** for the beta version. White Pine Software: **(603)886-0903** voice.

YAHOO! GETS NEW FACE, SPONSORS

One of the most useful search engines on the Web — **http://www.yahoo.com** — began in April 1994 as a hobby of two Stanford University EE Ph. D. students, David Filo and Jerry Yang. The Yahoo! database of Internet resources now takes 3 million hits from an estimated 300,000 daily users. Filo and Wang are now devoting their full time to developing Yahoo! as a business enterprise. The pair posted a survey asking users' input on improvements they would like, and some 67,000 responses gave the programmers plenty of work. The new Yahoo! includes Reuters newswire summaries updated each hour. Complete articles can be retrieved with a single click. Summaries are also indexed into Yahoo!'s hierarchical index, which has been streamlined and rearranged. Whimsical graphics have been added, enhancing Yahoo!'s traditional grassroots flavor. Forms-based searches can be entered from all pages, speeding navigation. The popular traditional features — What's Cool, What's Popular, What's News and Random Link — have all been retained. "Intelligently Integrated Advertisements" (a feat we'd like to match someday) provide revenue to fuel Yahoo! Corp.'s growth. Initial sponsors include the Internet Shopping Network, Mastercard, MCI, NECX and Worlds, Inc. Way to go, "hobbyists!"

RADIO STATIONS BECOME INTERNET PROVIDERS

The "community affinity" approach to selling Internet access works for BBSs, newspapers and now radio stations. EZ Communications Inc. (NASDAQ: EZCIA) is putting its 21 radio stations in the Internet Service Provider business. Radio Data Group, a new EZCI subsidiary, plans to add Web pages to every station and offer listeners SLIP/PPP accounts at fairly standard prices of **$10** to **$20** per month. RDG selected Internet Express of Colorado Springs to provide the software, Internet access and support services for all EZ radio stations. The first station to come online is KMPS AM/FM in Seattle, Washington. Its URL is **http://fine.com/kmps**. EZ Communications, Inc.: **(703)591-1000** voice. Internet Express: **(800)592-1241** voice.

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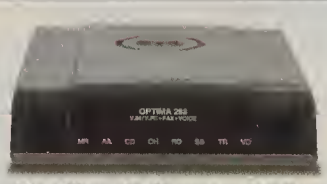

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Web site administrators who want to provide relational database search capabilities have been forced to write custom applications in C or Perl. Now dbWeb, a **$695** Windows NT product, makes life much easier. The product provides plug-and-play access to ODBC data sources (including MS SQL, MS Access, Sybase 4.2 System 10, Oracle 6 & 7) through any Web browser. HTTP servers supported by dbWeb include EMWAC HTTPS, Purveyor, WebSite 1.0, and Netscape Communications. Aspect Software Engineering: **(808) 539-3782** voice; **mailto:jplaurel@aspectse.com** or **http://www.aspectse.com**

DIAMOND MULTIMEDIA TO ACQUIRE SUPRA CORP.

Modem maker Supra Corp. agreed to merge with Diamond Multimedia Systems Inc. (NASDAQ: DIMD). Diamond produces graphics and multimedia accelerators, sound cards, audio/telephony subsystems and multimedia upgrade kits. The merged companies will work on a new generation of multimedia telecommunications products utilizing ISDN, digital phone services and Digital Simultaneous Voice Data (DSVD) technologies. Supra will continue to market and support its modems as usual. Combined revenues for both firms were **$255 million** in fiscal 1994 and topped **$200 million** in the first six months of 1995. Diamond Multimedia Systems: **(408)325-7000** voice. Supra Corp.: **(360)604-1400** voice; **http://www.supra.com**

XIRCOM DEBUTS SECOND-GENERATION WIRELESS LAN

Xircom, Inc., maker of portable/pocket networking products, has lowered prices on the second generation of its CreditCard Netwave Adapter and Netwave Access Point wireless LAN products. The CreditCard Netwave Adapter now has a MSRP of **$399**, while the Netwave Access Point base station sells for **$1499**. A new Netwave Starter Kit consisting of one Access Point and one adapter is available for **$799** through December 31, 1995; one starter kit per customer site, please. Improved Netwave software is available to existing customers at no charge via the Xircom BBS at **(805)376-9130**. Xircom, Inc.: **(800)438-4526** or **(805) 376-9300** voice.

ADVERTISING AGE TARGETS WEB SITES

Some 363,000 advertising, media and marketing executives read *Advertising Age*. The marketing mogul is putting together six annual spreads called Home.Page.Gallery, a showcase of "smart marketers who have an online presence." The closing date for the October 30 spread is October 12; for the November 20 edition, October 20. Rates range from **$1,300** for 6x to **$1,500** for 1x. Advertising Age: **(212)210-0165** voice or **http://www.AdAge.com**

HAYES OPTIMA MODEMS NOW RACK-MOUNTABLE

Hayes Microcomputer Products' fastest modems, the Optima 288 family, are now available in 8- and 16-unit rack mounts. The Century 8 and Century 16 products retail for **$4,695** and **$9,495** respectively. The modems are pre-assembled in the rack and pre-configured for easy installation. They also feature flash-ROM downloadable upgrades and hot swappable cards. Hayes Micrcomputer Products Inc.: **(404)840-9200** voice; **http://www.hayes.com**

WINSURFER PC CARD MODEM DRAWS ZERO POWER IN SLEEP MODE

New Media Corp. offers the first PC Card Windows-based modem to draw no power at all while not in use, and only 110 mA in operating mode. The battery-saving WinSurfer modem uses proprietary Zero Consumption APM (Advanced Power Management) technology. The 14.4 Kbps modem is expected to have a street price of **$100** to **$120** — pretty good for laptop accessories. The cost savings are achieved by eliminating the digital modem controller chip, substituting Windows-based controller software for hardware. New Media Corp.: **(714)453-0100** voice.

PINNACLE MICRO 4.6 GB OPTICAL DRIVE

The new Apex 4.6(tm) gigabyte 5.25-inch rewritable optical drive beats magnetic media on cost per megabyte — **$0.37** versus **$0.47** for a Seagate 4.3 Gb drive or **$0.60** for an Iomega Jaz 1.0 Gb drive. Retail prices are expected to be **$1500** to **$1695** for complete systems and **$199** per removable optical disk. Performance is on a par with magnetic giga-drives; the Apex transfers 6.0 Mb/sec, the average for magnetic drives. Pinnacle Micro: **(714) 789-3000** voice.

CONSUMER ONLINE SERVICE REPORT AVAILABLE

We get a lot of phone calls from readers seeking detailed information about the number of this or that population on the Internet, BBSs, the Big Boards, all of the above, by age, sex, race, income, etc. Demography is not our business, but Jupiter Communications can give you all the statistics you want. The company has just released its ***1995 Consumer Online Services*** report, describing the demographics, content and usage, technical and editorial development, history and projections and a host of other parameters for the major online services. The **$1895** 200-plus page report covers Prodigy, CompuServe, America Online, GEnie, Delphi, eWorld, the Imagination Network, AT&T's Interchange, EasyLink and Personalink, Dialog, Dow Jones News/Retrieval, Mead Data Central, Newsnet, and of course the Internet. The company publishes several other online services studies ranging from **$400** up. Jupiter Communications: **(212)780-6060** voice.

YAAA.COM: SEND EXECUTABLE CODE VIA E-MAIL

Internauts with e-mail-only accounts can exchange binary files by first encoding the 8-bit binaries to 7-bit ASCII text files, mailing the resulting files as e-mail messages, and decoding the files at the recipient's end to restore their 8-bit riginal format. The uuencode/uudecode utilities are widely used for this purpose. But there's a chicken/egg problem here; the recipient needs a copy of uudecode, a binary file which he cannot retrieve via e-mail.

YAAA.COM is a PC executable program written in ASCII. Actually this little gem from Padgett Peterson is a bit more than that — it's an executable ASCII program that will turn other **.COM** programs into executable ASCII files. You can export an e-mail message containing YAAA.COM to a text file, use a text editor to snip off the header information, and when you type YAAA the program runs!

Using YAAA couldn't be easier. Just enter the command **YAAA <filename>** where <filename> is the name of the .COM file to be processed as input. YAAA renames the original file with an extension of **.ORG** ("original"). The executable ASCII file will have the original filename with an extension of **.COM**; import this file into your e-mail message and send it.

You can pick up a copy of **YAAA.COM** from the Boardwatch BBS' "new upload area" at **(303)973-4222** or from **ftp://boardwatch.com** — of course, if you can ftp you probably don't need YAAA, but you may want to e-mail it to someone who does. ◆

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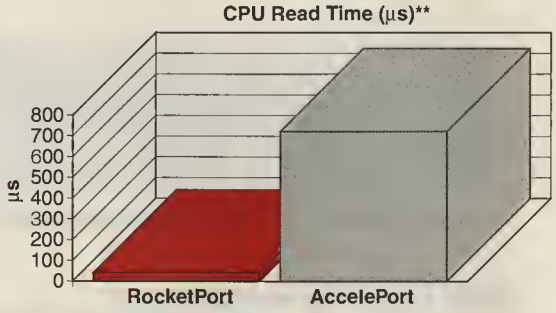

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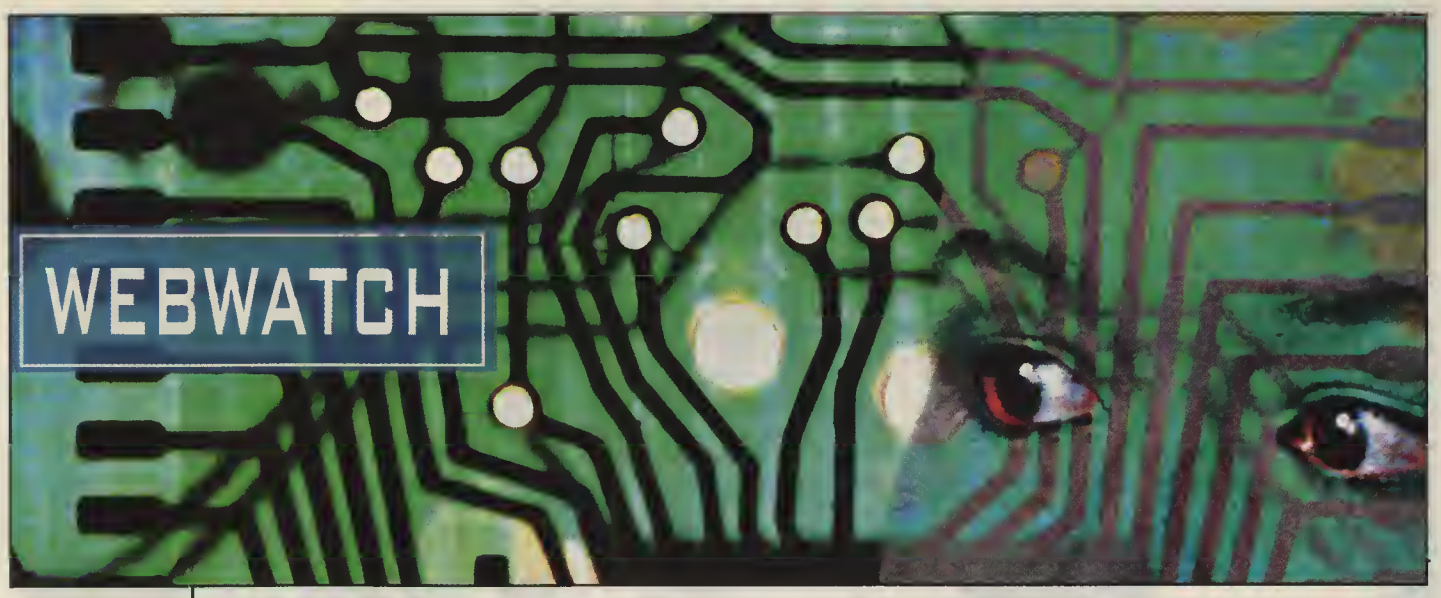
SCO OK

yes It runs with UnixWare

yes NetWare Tested and Approved

*Based on published connect speed and retail price. All product and company names are trademarks of their respective companies.

** Measurement based on driver call times.

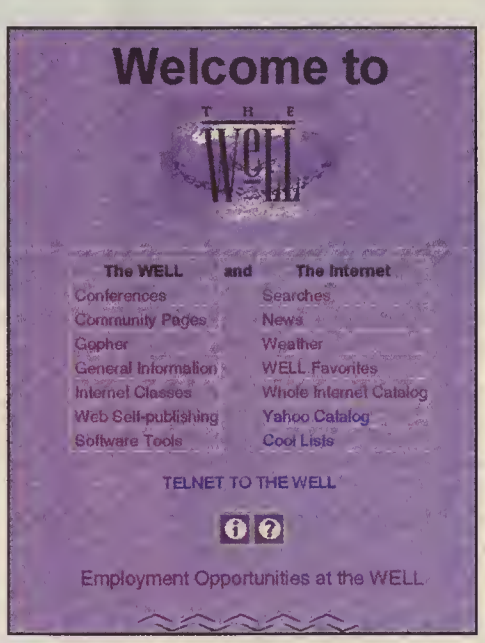


THE NEW BBS ON THE WEB - WHOLE EARTH 'LECTRONIC LINK

by Jack Rickard

The World Wide Web has deservedly captured the imagination of the online world. It displays both extraordinary connectivity, in that you can literally hop across continents by clicking the mouse, and a very visually appealing graphical interface. And it probably goes beyond that with the use of audio, videoclips, and more. But it is destined to die in its current form.

Through the entire history of the online community, there has been an urge to create pretty screens, have them blessed by lawyers, and presented online for the consumption of the masses, who in theory will each pay a little bit of coin of the realm for the privilege. Literally hundreds of millions of dollars drained into this rathole fantasy before those who created online services began observing what people *wanted* to do online. Visually appealing screens are always interesting and always a novelty. But after the novelty wears off, the callers move on. Knight-Ridder provided the most grisly example of this with their failed VIEWTRON service. But they weren't alone.



Currently the World Wide Web is in a nearly pure fad phase entirely based on novelty. Almost every site you visit has something new and stunning to offer by way of screen design tricks. But after clicking through the thousands of sites available for a few weeks, almost everyone tires of the game and starts looking for a home. Since most of what the web can do is present information via eye-candy screens, they rarely find one. So they are back to newsgroups and e-mail to keep them occupied.

This is not entirely apparent today. The flood of new callers just gaining access is immense. And according to an NTIA study just released, by the end of 1995, nearly half of the population online will have just arrived in 1995. But at some point, webulosis, a hardening of the web, could set in.

We don't actually think it will happen. There is enough in the combination of novelty and new blood to keep this in the air for some months. And that may be all that is needed. But for the Web to grow beyond pretty screens, bulletin boards or something very like bulletin boards must migrate to the Web and make it truly useful. In other words, web sites must evolve into "places" where there are "people" if they are to continue to be relevant beyond specialty publishing.

So our theory is that the Web is going to change into a series of bulletin boards. And bulletin boards, conversely, are going to migrate to the web with all the caller management, local message conferences, and sense of "place" that entails.

It was with some pleasure that we learned that one of the earliest bulletin boards to successfully make this transition to the web, also happens to be one of the best examples of a system with a sense of community extant online anywhere. This summer, the Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link or The WELL, made the trip to the World Wide Web interface in a most artful manner.

The WELL's Bruce Katz (CEO), Mark Graham (VP Business Development) and Hua-Pei Chen, (Technical Manager)

The WELL began life in April 1985. It was the brainchild of Stewart Brand, publisher of the ***Whole Earth Catalog*** and the magazine ***Whole Earth Review***. He teamed with a company titled NETI, who provided the PICOSPAN software that gave it its conferencing capabilities. NETI actually originally designed the software system used by General Electric's GEnie service. The WELL started life on a VAX 750.

The interface was spartan even in 1985. But the entire concept of the WELL was built on developing a community of users. In fact, the battle cry at every step of development has been that the WELL cannot survive the next onslaught of new callers, because it will change the community. Surprisingly enough, it has retained its charm in growing from the 300 or so early users to some 12,000 today, and remains very much the WELL. The point is, the WELL was not built on fancy graphics, or even very basic ANSI graphics. It was a terribly spartan and arcane interface — much like the UNIX operating system itself, it was quite powerful, but difficult to master.

The draw was primarily a series of topical conferences that had some key characteristics. Primary was the "quality" of the people commenting there. This "quality" is immeasurable, defies definition, and no one knows quite how to get it. But you can recognize it when you see it. The message traffic, while still containing a measurable level of flames, typos, and idiocy, is somehow a cut above. The conferences were archived such that you could trace discussions back six months, or even a year. In fact, there are messages accessible on the WELL today in some specific topics that stretch back nearly to the beginning of the community.

And the WELL had a pretty absolute policy of freedom of speech. They allowed NO one to be on the system anonymously, and they rather pioneered the concept that You Own Your Own Words (YOYOW) in that you had the sole copyright to anything you posted, and also the sole responsibility for what you said. Though unproven as a legal theory, it is probably the most workable model extant in the online community for many of the legal problems online services tangle with today.

The WELL has not been necessarily an operational or financial success story. It has faced several near brushes with death. At one point the VAX 750 simply couldn't handle the traffic. The WELL citizenry banded together and coughed about $25,000 to upgrade it to an eight processor mini in the late '80's.

And in the early '90's it reached a bit of an impasse. NETI still owned half of the entity that operated the WELL, but NETI had essentially gone out of business. Their only operating asset was the WELL and the WELL had never been really profitable. It had a board of directors, but they were hesitant to authorize any real investment in upgrading the system because of the ownership uncertainties.

Bruce Katz grew up in Massachusetts in an area where many of the now common names in personal computers actually developed. He won a National Science Fair award in 1960 with a computer he had built from electro-mechanical relays and he graduated from Cornell University with a degree in Engineering Physics. But he went into the shoe business as they say and founded the Rockport Shoe Company, which he grew into a $300 million enterprise and ultimately sold out to Reebok International in 1986. He moved to California in 1987 and began looking for a way to turn his love affair with computers into a more functional activity. He actually was awarded a prize at one of Esther Dyson's conventions for being the attendee most removed from the computer industry. He was convinced that the real power of computers lay in their use as a communications device rather than as office equipment.

He joined a group called the Global Business Network designed to pool the expertise of a variety of experts from varying fields and met Stewart Brand. The GBN actually corresponded via a private conference on the WELL and he joined the system to participate in some of the discussions. In conversations with Brand, the topic of "what to do about NETI" came up once too often; Katz visited NETI in person and worked out a deal to purchase their half of the WELL. By January 1994, he purchased the other half of the system from the Point Foundation, the group that published ***Whole Earth Review*** and owned the other half of the WELL. And he invested a considerable amount of his own personal resources, time and energy in the project to revitalize the WELL.

The results have been encouraging. WELL membership has grown from slightly over 5000 members at that point to some 12,000 today. But while determined to bring the system up to technical and operational snuff, Katz carefully nurtured the parts of the WELL that did work — the culture, flavor, and community of the system. And it is recognizably the WELL today, even with a pretty new WEB interface.

Katz moved the system from the ramshackle building at Gate Five Road in Sausalito to a new office building on Bridgeway, and built the staff up to about thirty people. He brought on Hua-Pei Chen as technical manager. Ms. Chen has a Masters degree in Computer Science and nine years of experience as a systems and network administrator. He also brought on Mark Graham, founder of the Internet Service Provider Pandora Systems.

The technical vagaries of the past two years have not been without cost. The group invested about 14 months in the development of a proprietary system that really did a marvelous job at e-mail, conferencing, chat, and more using a GUI interface for Windows and the Macintosh. But as the World Wide Web developed, the group came to believe that using a standard open interface would probably be a better move than introducing yet another proprietary interface peculiar to their single system. John Cho, an intern from UC Berkeley, claimed he could get the entire system up and running on the Web. He enlisted the aid of a friend at UC Berkeley, David Wu, and within a couple of months had a basic prototype cooking.

Katz meanwhile had been wrestling with the entire platform. They moved from the Sequent mini's to Sun SPARCstations. And they realized a T1 connection was not going to handle the traffic for them. So they embarked on the misadventure of gaining admittance to the newly forming good old boys club of top-tier Internet service providers. Just this past month, they've gotten a single 45 Mbps DS3 connection up with a CISCO 7000 router on site. And they have the expansion capability on tap to run up to three DS3 fiber links into their offices.

They also formed an alliance with UUNET allowing them to sell SLIP/PPP access this past June across the country at about **$2.50** per hour — a much more competitive rate than the **$5-$6** per hour they were able to manage with CompuServe's X.25 network — and at a much higher 28.8 kbps speed to boot. As of the end of August, they had 90 cities up and operating and expect to have 150 by the end of the year with European access by the end of the first quarter 1996. And they are providing their own startup software kit to new members, termed the WHOLE WORKS, which includes the Netscape browser, Eudora e-mail program, a USENET news reader, and a variety of utilities, that make it reasonably easy to get up and running with one of their PPP access ports.

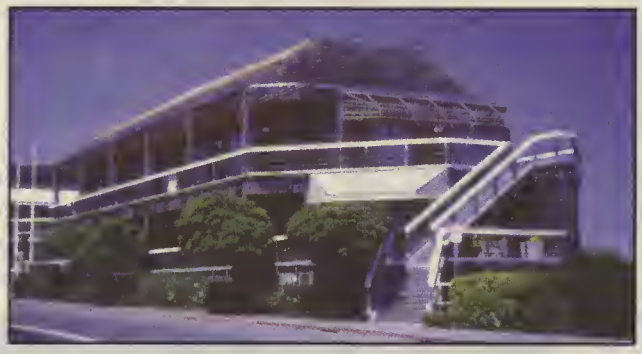
But beyond going into the ISP business to give their callers less expensive access to both the WELL and beyond, the heart of the WELL remains its conferencing system. The system sports some 260 topical conferences covering art, literature, GenerationX, jazz, parenting, music, and so forth, with a variety of subtopics. These are public discussion areas. Additionally, there are some 1500 private conferences operating. You don't see these on any menu, and you virtually have to be invited to join one to get in, but they are an important part of the community.

The WWW interface is actually very well done. It was initially unveiled in August at ONE BBSCON and is titled the WELL Engaged. You can view the system roughly at **http://www.well.com**. But you can't actually participate in any of the message conferences without a paid membership.

John Cho and Dave Wu, WELL Engaged designers

Sausalito, CA: home of The WELL

You can register for the system online via this web page. The 260 conferences are arranged menu-style of course. But we found a couple of items worth special note. First, there is a search engine by Personal Library Software (PLS) that is just a wee bit awesome. It can do full text searches across all 260 public conferences. Unlike USENET, which most hosts age off at about the 10 day mark, the WELL archives their message conferences for years. As a result, there are gigabytes of message text covering every conceivable topic with comments from some of the more active visionaries in the personal computer industry. In some subtle aspects, it begins to look like a treasure trove of computerabilia collected over the past few years. More info on PLS from **http://www.pls.com.**



The WELL's Office Building

Another fetching aspect is that the WELL was probably one of the first popular systems to allow members to create their own home pages on the system — beginning in February 1995. Each member is allowed 5 MB of space for their home page at no charge with additional space available for modest fees. What makes it all work is an index to member pages that is really quite accessible. Browsing through this index and dipping into just a few of these pages gives you a sense of the WELL membership in a way unobtainable on most online services.

The system is notable for its strong sense of community. That is an advantage and a disadvantage as well. Not everyone will LIKE this community. It is VERY California, for one thing. But there is also a kind of mystique about the WELL having to do with "visionary thinking." They have touted the online presence of visionaries such as Howard Rhiengold and others so much, that we could hardly find anyone on the WELL that didn't either aspire to or already consider themselves "visionaries." And the homepage index actually does let you get a much better picture of the citizens of the WELL. Note that ALL of them apparently were way out ahead of Marshall McLuhan and Alvin Toffler and appear very anxious that everyone else be at least passingly aware of this. At some point you just damn near choke on all the visionary thinking going on. And despite the fact that over half of their 12,000 members are now geographically located outside of California, the system is very much in Sausalito. So it is just a wee bit liberal. But for an online service to have a strong sense of culture and community, it probably by definition has to have some identifiable characteristics. And the WELL has that. I suppose it could have been developed by the conservative magazine ***American Spectator*** originally instead of the ***Whole Earth Review***. I guess it would have been known as the American Spectator 'Lectronic Link or ASLL?? How would we pronounce that?

As to the future, Katz doesn't put much emphasis on their new role as Internet Service Provider, as he views it as ultimately a commodity business. It allows them to provide national access at a lower cost. But he does point to some fairly immediate plans to provide real-time chat, which they actually have operational now — it's just not open to the public yet. They have plans to add VRML, REALAUDIO, and they are even toying with CUSeeMe for video. And they are working very closely with Netscape to take strong advantage of some of the new features of the Netscape Browser due out in a few weeks — including the Java interpreter, and some functions to allow you to provide toolbars on screen and freeze screen sections that could make navigation much easier.

Katz seems genuinely a fan of the concept of community in some geographic sense. They have some rather vague plans regarding deploying the WELL on a more global scale yet. One of these involves partnering with other Internet Service Providers to include membership in the WELL with the PPP access many smaller ISPs provide. This will basically give the ISPs some content and the WELL new members. Beyond that, there is some concept of regional WELLs. The WELL has conferences now for New York City and the Rocky Mountain Region, but Katz envisions going a bit beyond that — almost to a franchise-like concept where they provide the software and tools to build your own WELL in Tel Aviv or Brussels, or Biloxi. Katz asserts that there are some concepts of community intrinsically tied to your geography — where the problems of schools and education in Arkansas might be quite different from those in the Bay area. Or where nighttime entertainment is just done differently in Washington D.C. than it is in San Francisco. And he points to the 100-plus face-to-face events sponsored by the WELL over the years as part of that regional flavor. So he envisions a series of WELLs spotted around the globe with a local geographic component.

Pricing for the WELL varies a bit under several different plans. The basic deal is a **$15** signup fee, which causes the WHOLE WORKS software package to appear on your porch, and a **$15** monthly fee, which gives you 5 hours per month of connect time. Additional hours using PPP (Point to Point Protocol — a dialup form of the Internet Protocol) are **$2.50** per hour. Heavy users can get discounts from this using a variety of different "plans" that raise the monthly fee and lower the per hour charges. If you are already on the Internet and don't need PPPaccess, you get 10 hours monthly access for **$15**, and additional hours are **$1.25**.

The WELL has always been attractive as an interesting example of an online community. For a while it seemed mired in an aging and arcane interface destined to be a quirky waypoint on the online horizon. But with the creative energies of Bruce Katz and his new team, they may just lead the online industry out of its current doldrum of self absorbed re-examination, and show what success looks like in a new online environment. Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link, 1750 Bridgeway, Sausalito, CA 94965-1900; **(415)332-9200 voice**; **(415)332-9355** fax; **(415)332-8410** data; **http://www.well.com**; **mailto:info@well.com.**◆

HAYES/BOCA MARRIAGE CALLED OFF

The proposed merger between Boca Research, Inc. and Hayes Microcomputer Products, Inc. seems to have come apart as of August 24th. Hayes has been in Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization for the past year. Boca Research had offered 1.65 million shares of stock and the assumption of **$65** million to **$75** million in debt to acquire Hayes.

The two companies had received permission to negotiate a merger from the Atlanta bankruptcy court. Initial plans were for the resulting company to operate under the Hayes name, but to be headed by Boca Research Chief Executive Anthony F. Zalenski. The deal seems to have soured when it became apparent that Dennis C. Hayes, who founded Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc. in 1978, was continuing to explore other sources of investment in his company. The main issue seemed to be reluctance of Dennis C. Hayes to forfeit control of the future of the company. The ***Atlanta Journal-Constitution*** quoted Hayes: "I think a lot of people are trying to make it a case of me having a big ego. My concern is for the future...about how the company is managed."

The merger was widely viewed as an excellent marriage. Boca Research has historically provided an impressive manufacturing capacity, but was not widely viewed as an engineering powerhouse with their typically low-end budget-priced modem offerings. Hayes has been a leader in design, but much of their current financial woes seem linked to manufacturing difficulties. In any event, it was announced August 24th that talks between the two companies had been discontinued. Boca cited management philosophy differences and the fact that Hayes had continued to consider other alternatives for emergence from Chapter 11. Boca Research is a publicly traded company on NASDAQ under the symbol **BOCI**. The deal had sent shares in Boca soaring from **$17** to a high of **$36.50**. It closed on August 25th at **$23.75**.

INTERESTING NUMBERS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration has released results of a study titled ***FALLING THROUGH THE NET: A Survey of the "Have Nots" in Rural and Urban America*** that we found quite interesting on two fronts.

The first is that this study illustrates, in a rather total way, the intellectual bankruptcy extant in our Nation's Capital. The Clinton Administration particularly leads the charge in taking a political stand and subsequently funding a "study" to develop the statistical basis to support it. This study provides a superb example of this. Beginning with the concept that there are information haves and information have nots, and that further the government should do something about it, the NTIA, under the auspices of the Department of Commerce and using some of the resources of the U.S. Census Department, sets out to prove it. And they do a predictably sloppy job of it but do more or less congratulate themselves on getting there.

We don't know if "information have-nots" are a problem or not, and found ourselves curiously unenlightened in that respect after reviewing the report somewhat thoroughly. We just found it shocking that rather than statistically studying information access in America, and noting the inevitable anomalies, this group simply made up a situation and so

blatantly set out to prove it with numbers. It's discouraging to consider adult people wearing clothes who go through life this way.

That said, we found the study fascinating for another reason. In July 1994, NTIA contracted with the Census Bureau to include questions on computer/modem ownership and usage in the Current Population Survey conducted in November 1994. This recent CPS surveyed 54,000 homes.It incorporated numbers generated in a late 1994 survey of 54,000 households done by the U.S.. Whatever numbers you may consider to be "real," these numbers are both official and current, and will likely be the basis of business plans for years to come.

The interesting data of course lies in the tables accompanying the document. Approximately 93.8% of all U.S. homes have a telephone. The lowest group of people living in the central (inner) cities with incomes of less than **$10,000** per year, STILL achieves 79.8% telephone usage. Amerika — what a country!. The peak group was rural America where incomes exceeded **$75,000** per year - 99.2%.

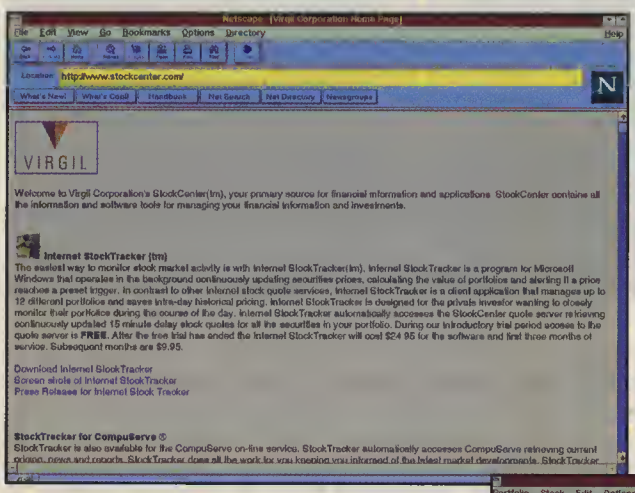
U.S. Households with computers was also interesting. Only 4.5% of rural homes with incomes of less than **$10,000** per year owned a computer. Some 64.4% of urban homes with incomes greater than **$75,000** sported the devices. And at the **$35,000-$49,999** income level, 34.9% of urban, 34.7% of central city, and 32.7% of rural homes had computers.

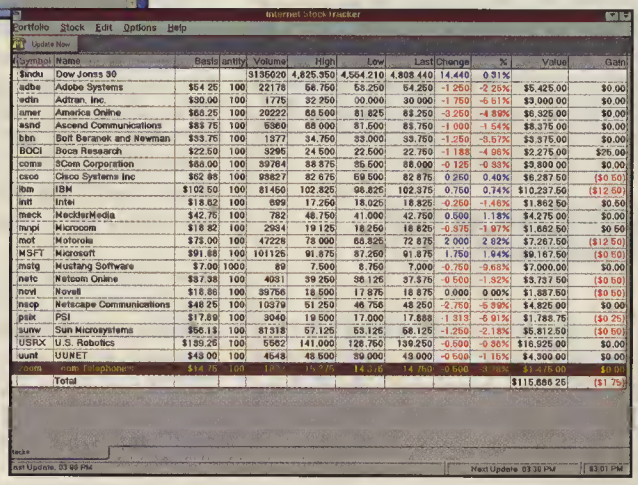
Of those homes with computers, the study also examined which homes had modems. The low end of the scale was rural homes with less than **$10,000** annual income at 23.6%. In urban areas with incomes in excess of **$75,000** per year, the total was 58.1% of homes. Urban homes in the **$35,000-$49,000** range was at about 45.6%. The study also goes into some detail on the percentage of households with modems and computers that use online services to search classified ads, to access government reports, to take courses online, etc.

The study was less than useful in that it didn't really summarize any totals; the point was to show that different geographic areas with different incomes lacked computers and modems

and the wherewithal to go online. But we can pick an average market — say those earning **$35,000** to **$49,999** in total household income — and suggest that about 34% of those households have computers and about 45% of those with computers have modems. That would indicate that somewhat greater than 15% of the households in that income bracket have computers, modems, telephones, and can play the game.

Despite the transparency of the political motivation, we found the study interesting and it provides an official source for the types of numbers those generating business plans are searching to find. Both the study text and the tabular data are now available at the NTIA web site at **http://www.ntia.doc.gov**





INTERNET STOCKTRACKER - PORTFOLIO MANAGER FOR THE INTERNET

Virgil Corporation has announced ***Internet StockTracker(tm)***, claiming it's the first portfolio manager for the Internet. StockTracker operates in the background continuously updating securities prices, calculating the value of portfolios and alerting if a price reaches a preset trigger. In contrast to other Internet stock quote services, StockTracker is a specialized application that manages up to 12 different portfolios and saves intra-day pricing on the users' computer. StockTracker is designed for the private investor wanting to closely monitor their portfolios during the course of the day.

With the single click of the Update button, StockTracker connects to the StockCenter(tm) quotes server and automatically retrieves the latest prices for up to 200 securities. "We have simplified and automated the process of monitoring your stocks. Instead of navigating to a Web server and individually entering your stock symbols every time you want a quote, you enter your portfolio once and StockTracker automatically does updates for you and calculates your gains," says Robert Simon, president of Virgil Corporation. "With StockTracker and the Internet, you can be fully connected to the markets."

StockTracker is a MS Windows application that automatically updates prices for equities, mutual funds and indexes from all North American securities exchanges. The application operates in the background accessing the StockCenter server every hour, half hour or other user-specified period, retrieving 15 minute delayed quotes. StockTracker includes high and low price alerts which inform you when a stock has reached a certain price level. With StockPager, an add-on option for StockTracker, you can be notified of price alerts by pager. StockTracker acts as a financial agent for individual investors by continually monitoring their portfolios and alerting them to price movements which provides an easy and cost-effective way to manage and track investments.

Internet StockTracker is available immediately for **$24.95** which includes three months of service. Subsequent service fees are **$9.95** per month. Internet StockTracker is available by accessing **http://www.stockcenter.com**. StockTracker requires Windows 3.1, Windows 95, or Windows NT with a Winsock compatible connection to the Internet.

The software actually appears to be free and you can download the program from the web site. It runs about 1 megabyte. It is a self-extracting **.EXE** file. Once extracted, simply click on **SETUP.EXE** and it installs itself very easily. It could not possibly be easier to use. You basically enter stocks by name and ticker symbol into a portfolio type spreadsheet. You can have multiple portfolios. It does NOT have a function to look up ticker symbols. So we used the **http://www.pcquote .com** site to look up a series of stocks related to the Internet. You can also enter the purchase price and number of shares, and it will total your entire portfolio. The program can be set to automatically update the spreadsheet on a schedule, or you can click a button to get an instant update.

The service itself is currently free during the promotional period. The program is almost disconcerting in operation. You do not login to anything, enter any URLs, or actually take any action at all. It accesses the quote server through your winsock and you can watch as it updates the spreadsheet row by row. But there is no sense of being "connected" to anything. You can also export the portfolio data in formats for such popular stock programs as MetaStock, TeleChart, Quicken, and in standard ASCII format.

We found the program easy to use, very quick on the updates, and about the easiest way on the planet to monitor stocks. Ultimately at **$9.95** per month, this program is a winner for even casual investors.

Virgil Corporation, founded in 1991, develops and publishes communication applications for automating access to online services. Virgil Corporation, 290 Green Street, Suite #1, San Francisco, CA 94113; **(415)433-4698** voice; **(415)433-8411** fax; **mailto:info@virgilcorp.com** ◆

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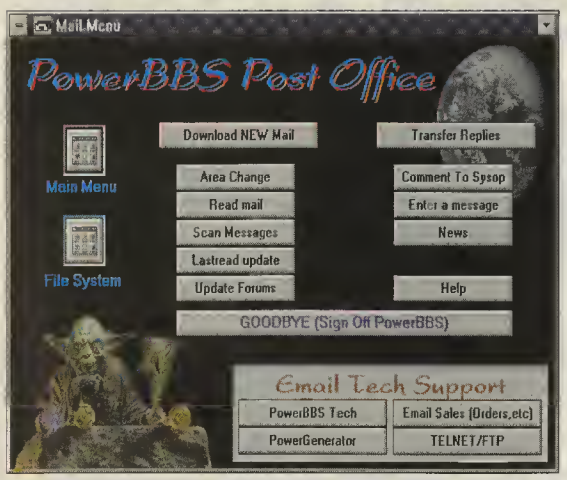

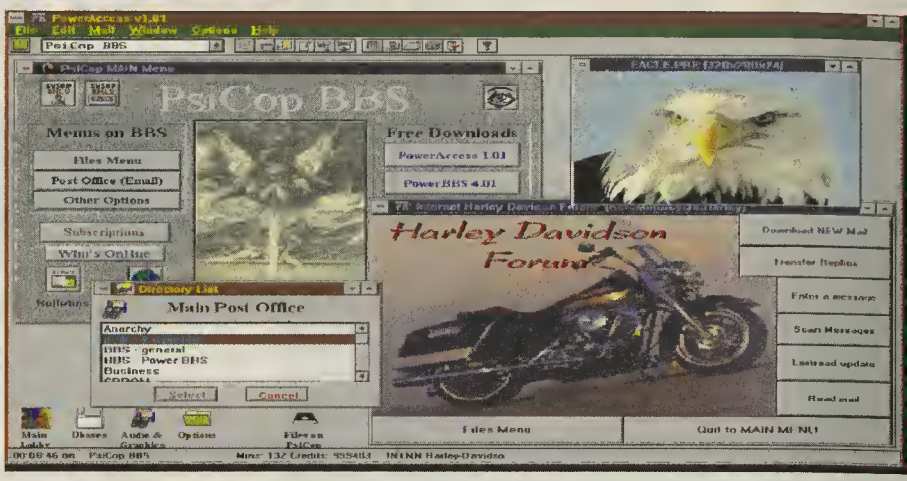

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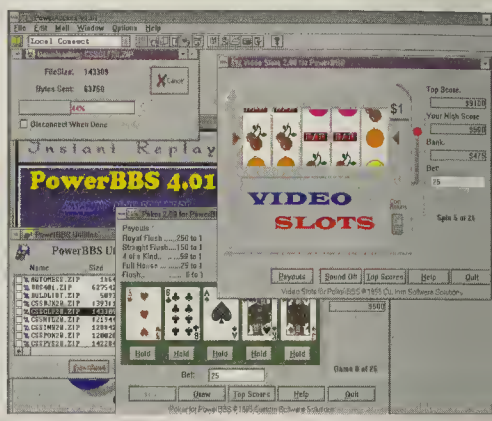

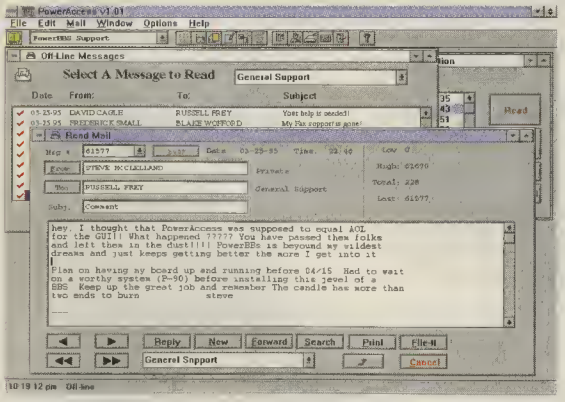

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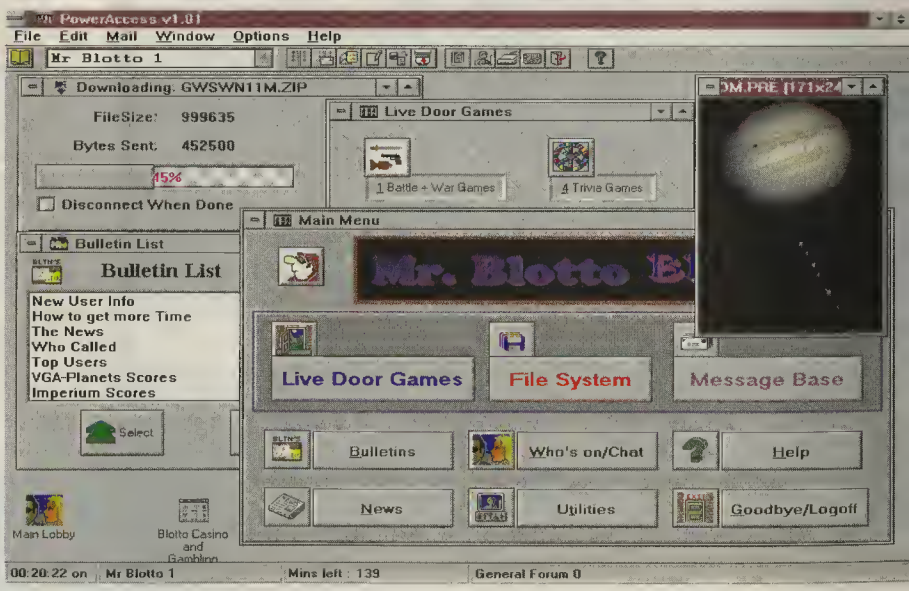

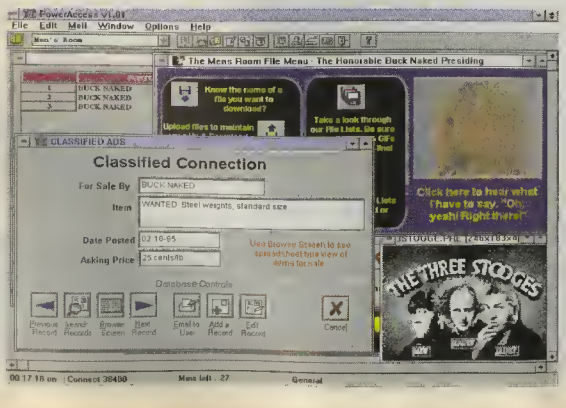

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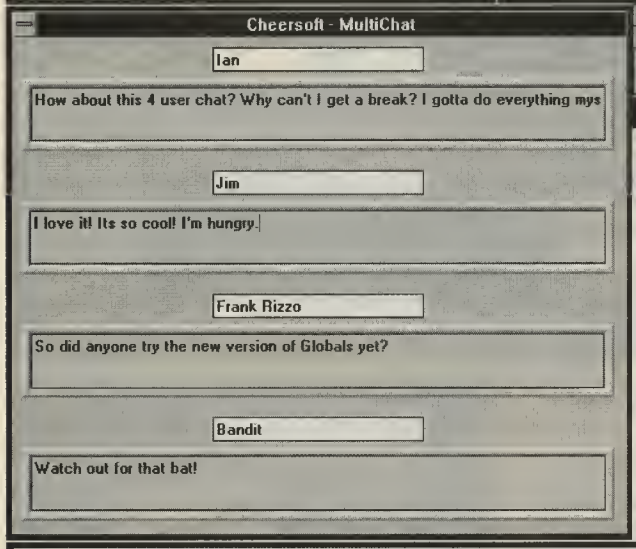

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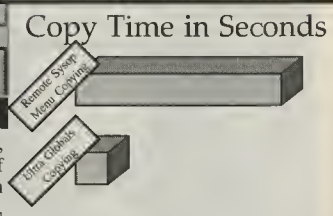

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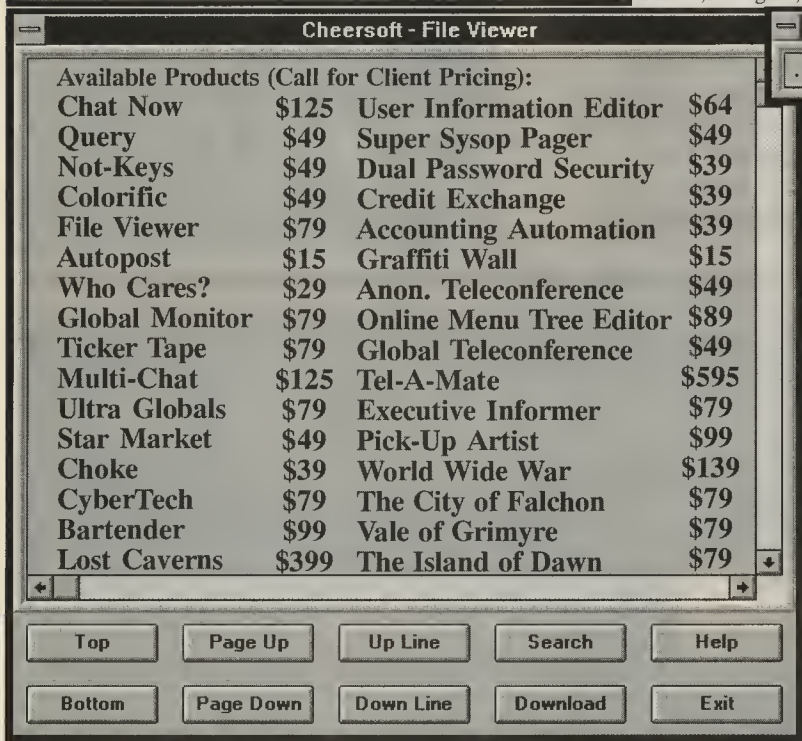

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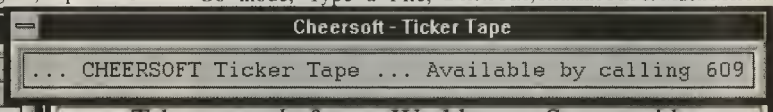

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BABB'S BOOKMARKS by Chris Babb

HALLOWEEN & THE WEB SHIVERS!

Halloween will be upon us this month. The familiar collection of scary movies will be on the tube and scary (but cute!) little people will be pounding on your door, yelling "Trick or Treat! Smell my feet! Give me something good to eat!" or possibly splattering your house with eggs. I was thinking about giving out tricks instead of candy this year. As a kid, I always wondered what would happen if I went to a house and instead of a treat, I got a trick.

Chris Babb is a Senior Systems Engineer for Control Masters, Inc., a Systems Integrator located in Downers Grove, IL, where he designs industrial automation software by day. He's a member of the Aquila BBS/Internet Team by night. Chris has worked with Aquila since 1990 and currently handles technical support, Web design and construction, Internet training and various other online and offline duties. In his meager spare time, Chris enjoys music, playing bass guitar, the outdoors and his kitties. You can reach Chris via **mailto:chris.babb@aquila.com**

The most fun I ever had on Halloween was the first year I lived in my own house. I was beginning to run out of candy, so I left my friends to man the door and I went to the nearby grocery store. When I returned, there was a fog coming from my front porch. As I opened the front door, I was blasted with the loudest, scariest, most mind-shattering sound I have ever heard, coming from all directions. My friends didn't think that was enough, though. As I looked into the house, this gruesome form in a hideous mask shot up into view brandishing my biggest kitchen knife and started screaming at the top of his lungs while the shower scene music from "Psycho" assaulted my senses. Excellent!

After a quick change of undies, I took a good look at what my house had become. Being in a band has its advantages. The fog was from a professional stage fog machine. We could fill my front yard (and my house) with a thick, foul-smelling cloud of this stuff. There were P.A. speakers behind the bushes, connected to a state-of-the-art Korg Synthesizer, manned by a master keyboard player who has a touch of genius when it comes to setting the proper mood with music. Add a stage strobe light backlighting a 6'-4" man wearing a hideous mask and mechanics overalls while wielding a 12" knife and you have the recipe for a pretty good laugh and the ability to scare the most holiday-jaded person into a quivering, heaving wreck.

Some of the kids screamed. Two kids jumped into the bushes. Parents were either snickering in delight or grabbing their kids and pushing them off my property as quick as they could. Some kids came back for seconds. We had a ball!

I had a ball this year while scaring up the most frightening Web sites for your personal terror. I was unprepared for the heaping amount of them available, just waiting to scare the daylights out of all of us unsuspecting souls who adventure on the Web. There were lots of interesting things to dig up. Vampires, werewolves, goblins and gargoyles topped the list in sheer numbers. Right behind them were sites on the occult and pages of cults to complement this dark side of the Web. Add to this a couple of Ouiji Boards and you too can be frightened out of your wits. Also available are pages promoting some local haunted houses, pagan gatherings and a host of other terribly scary things from the not-quite-dead to the not-really-alive. All of these sites have frighteningly huge lists of even more horrible things for your viewing pleasure.

One neat thing I found this month is that I am finally seeing some **.MID** files on something other than the Cakewalk Home Page. A **.MID** is the generic MIDI file format. This file contains not music, but the information that a device such as a synthesizer or wave table soundcard needs to synthesize a song. You may be asking yourself, "What good would a **.MID** do me without an expensive synthesizer to play it on?" Actually, for less than **$100**, you can turn your ordinary Soundblaster into an expensive-sounding MIDI synthesizer, just by plugging an add-on card into the 26-pin connector located on most Soundblaster 16 cards. I use the Ensoniq Soundscape daughterboard and have found it to be extremely capable. I'm happy that I found another use for it with the Web.

Babb's Bookmarks for October, 1995

PHANTASMAGORIA

http://www.lehigh.edu/~tpl2/phantom.html

The word *phantasmagoria* is defined as "a rapidly changing series of things seen or imagined, as in a dream." This site seems to fit that definition and I believe it to be the definitive home of horror links and sounds on the Web.

The initial screen sets the mood with the background of skulls and the perfect font for the logos, which are well done throughout this site. While finding out more about Phantasmagoria, I came upon informa-

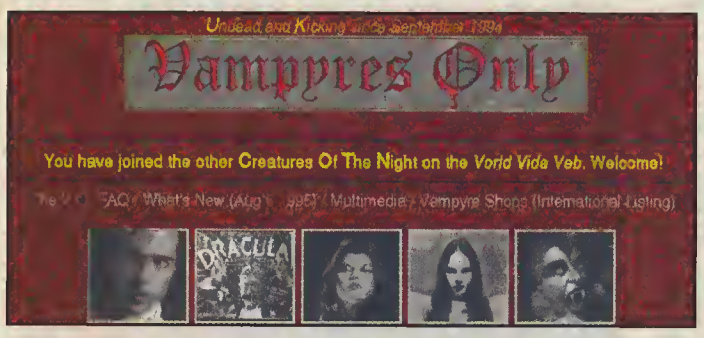
tion for a large Halloween event located in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, listing the dates, times and other necessary information for anyone who will attend. There is also a well done pumpkin **.AVI** and a sound file that keeps the creepy feeling of this site going. A quick jump back to the main page gets you to the real meat of this site.

The archives of electronic horror are truly horrific in the number of really creepy and excellently assembled sights and sounds that would delight even the most unimpressible person. This page is filled to the margins with sound files: creaking doors, smashing heads (my personal favorite), paralyzing screams and the biting crack of a whip that almost made me whimper in delight. There are also scary movie clips and animations, theme songs from frightful television shows, ghastly DOS and Windows games, creepy fonts, screen savers and much more. Be sure that your helper applications are set up to handle all the **.WAV**, **.AU**, **.AVI**, **.MOV** and **.MID** files available to make the squeamish squirm and the grotesque giggle.

Another frightening feature of this site is the bottomless pit of links to other horror sites on the web. I was stuck here for over a day while looking through it and was absolutely amazed at the sheer number and quality of sites devoted to scaring the pants off me and you. Virtually anything from the occult to the familiar cast of Vampires, werewolves and gargoyles to Ouiji Boards that use your mouse as the pointer are available for a nightmarish ride through the haunts of the Web.

My most revolting recommendation goes out to this site. There are more "horrible" things here than you can shake a bone at.

VAMPYRES ONLY



http://www.vampyre.wis.net/vampyre/index.html

Vampires seem to comprise the vast majority of horror sites on the Web. Why the fascination with Vampires? Maybe it has something to do with being immortal. Maybe a fascination with drinking blood. Maybe because, like most true Webaholics, we all seem to be awake during the night, browsing the Web, and asleep during the day in preparation of another night of sucking the Web dry of cool and astounding sites. Maybe it's even more sinister than that. Regardless of the real reason, if you have a fascination about Vampires, this is a good place to start.

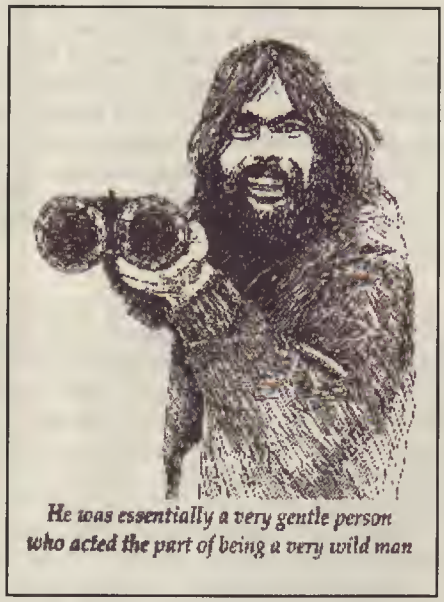
Have you ever wondered if you are a Vampire? Be sure to take the Vampire Probability Test. 100 questions ranging from Blood Tolerance ("Do you have a strong lust reaction and start to salivate at the sight of blood?") to your sense of humor ("Do you giggle at funerals?") will help you put this haunting dilemma into perspective. Have you ever wondered about your probability of becoming a Vampire? Take the Vampire Probability Test to determine your true fate in life (or the after-life). I miserably failed both, fortunately.

Various Vampire stories and texts are available in their electronic forms. These range from the writings of Anne Rice to some Sherlock Holmes cases and are sure to satisfy your thirst for Vampire Fiction. There is also a huge compilation of Vampire art, photography and multimedia to get your blood going. Everything from drawings to movie posters to audio to actual screen shots of movies and short clips of the movies themselves are easily clickable to satisfy your lust for Vampire material.

If you're licking your lips (or teeth) in anticipation of finding even more Vampire related information, be sure to click on "Fangdom : The Vampyre's List of Lists." I was aghast at the number of books, magazines, anthologies, comics and related Vampire information in print. This list includes not only what is available on the Web, but even more that can be found at the local library and bookstores or seen in movies and on TV. All of them are categorized and alphabetized to make them easy find. Another useful feature is that any of these that are somewhere on the Web can be viewed simply by clicking on them.

Be sure to visit this site if you have any interest whatsoever in Vampires or anything related to Vampires. The amount of information available here is staggering and well worth the visit.

STEVEN KING



http://phrtay10.ucsd.edu/~ed/sk/

While not the typical Halloween site, you can't think of Halloween without thinking of the MASTER of horror, Steven King. I started reading his books back when *Salem's Lot* came out and have read virtually every one since then. My favorite, which was finally made into a movie, was *The Stand*. Not your typical Steven King horror story, but one of the best of all of his works.

This site is basically a fan page devoted to Steven King's books, movies and assorted other goodies. The newest upcoming releases from the King of Horror are listed along with links to all that is King. A complete reference of all the books and short stories that Steven has written is cataloged with a description of the story where appropriate, a list of the main characters and all kinds of other extraneous tidbits that even I didn't know. I even found 3 or 4 books and short stories that I haven't yet read. There are also lists of uncollected short stories that have appeared throughout the years that never made it into one of the Steven King Collections; a list of upcoming film projects and all the past Steven King films that is in turn linked to detailed information about the characters and the actors portraying them, the cinematographers, producers and editors; screenplays; shelved projects; student projects; TV movies and commercials and a host of other information that is a must for any true King fan. I shouldn't fail to mention that there is also a post from

alt.books.steven-king written by the master himself and links to other Steven King fan pages including some "other" Steven Kings. By the way, have I said Steven King enough?

All horror fans should visit this page with morbid abandon.

MEL'S GODZILLA PAGE

http://www.ama.caltech.edu/~mrm/godzilla.html

There is nothing quite as funny as watching someone talk in a movie and noticing that the words you hear are nothing like the way the speaker's lips are moving. Almost reminds me of some of the terrible lip-syncing I have seen in music videos. Godzilla movies and almost all Japanese movies of this genre are like this. I remember these movies being shown on the local UHF channel every Sunday while I was growing up and always found myself spellbound while watching them. Now that I think back to it, I'm not sure if it was because it was scary, funny, or ridiculous. Nevertheless, they were always entertaining.

This page is quite a production. Excellent graphics, well laid out design and monstrous amounts of information of everyone's favorite monster movie character. From this page you can read about the newest Godzilla movie, due out in December, and how it promises that Godzilla will finally bite the big bullet. Oh well, he has had a long and interesting life and I'm sure that the population of Tokyo will breath a collective sigh of relief now that the city is finally out of harm's way — or at least Godzilla's way. I'm sure that Mothra, Rodan and Gamera will be back in the future to wreak havoc on the unsuspecting souls living there.

Another useful feature of this site is the complete listing of all Godzilla movies since the first one in 1954. There are 22 in all and they are listed with release date, description and a personal rating of 1 to 4 stars with information on attendance figures and a blurb on how much money the last Godzilla movie grossed. There is also a mountain of excellent action pictures and movie posters available for your perusal along with links to give you information on virtually every monster that has appeared in a Godzilla movie to date. Each of these pages gives you a frightening picture of each monster, background information such as height, weight, air speed, special weapons and which films they appeared in and other pictures and sound files. Most interesting and quite a bit of work to gather all of this information for your enjoyment.

There is much more available to help round out your knowledge of Godzilla and I'm sure it will make you the hit at any trivia party. Be sure to visit this site for all your Godzilla needs.

MARS MACABE MANIA

http://www.mkpl.com/cmp/mars/macabehm.html

If you're interested in providing a place of hospitable horror for the masses this Halloween, here is an interesting little site I found while obtaining this month's picks. Marketplace Asset Recovery Services specializes in "Equipment for the professional quality spook!" You can obtain information on various props that have been collected from a commercial haunted house to use in your very own horror haunt. Some of the equipment available includes caskets, haunted floors and walls, electric chairs (I want one!) and costumes among other fun things. Simply click on the items you're interested in and fill out the form at the bottom of the page to have information sent to you through snailmail.

HORROR HAVEN

http://www.magicnet.net/~tkearns/horror.html

Horror movies always seem to be popular in the movie theaters. There is always something new that is scary, gory, hideous or haunting. Some of my other favorite horror movies are *Return Of The Living Dead* (also the funniest) and *The Evil Dead II* (again funny) and *Alien* (the scariest). I can only take so much killing and bloodletting without reason, there has to be more to keep my interest.

This site is a collection of most every horror movie produced this century. Each has been categorized by type such as Old Classics, New Classics, The Die-Laughing Classics, The Gore Fest Classics and The Grim Remnants. Clicking on a category will take you to a very complete listing of that type of movie. The Old Classics include such favorites as *Frankenstein*, *The Mummy*, *Psycho* and *Invasion Of The Body Snatchers*. The New Classics include familiar titles like *Halloween*, *Alien*, *Friday The 13th* and *The Abominable Dr. Phibes* (a very cool movie). The Die Laughing Classics has *The Brain That Wouldn't Die*, *House* (see this one) and *Planet Of The Apes* among others. The Gore Fest Classics will stir your stomach contents with the likes of *The Re-Animator*, *Return Of The Living Dead* and *Hellraiser*. To round out this collection of horror movies we have the Grim Remnants which contains movies like *Carrie*, *Predator* and *PumkinHead*.

Each of these lists of gruesomely wonderful horror movies is detailed with the title of the movie, release date, rating, running time, director and cast of characters. This is a great list to haunt before hitting the video stores in search of fitting movies for the holiday of horror.

THE INTERACTIVE HUMAN CORPSE

http://www.scp.caltech.edu/~mep/ivb.html

This site really isn't a horror site, although some may find it quite hideous. It really is kind of morbid but it does show off some of the capabilities of CGI (Common Gateway Interface) scripts and what can be done on the Web in terms of educating and providing interesting and informative things in a very unique way, not to mention the amazing rendering capabilities of a Silicon Graphics Computer. Plus, what good is Halloween without a corpse somewhere? Here's a very pleasant and very dead one for your interactive examining pleasure.

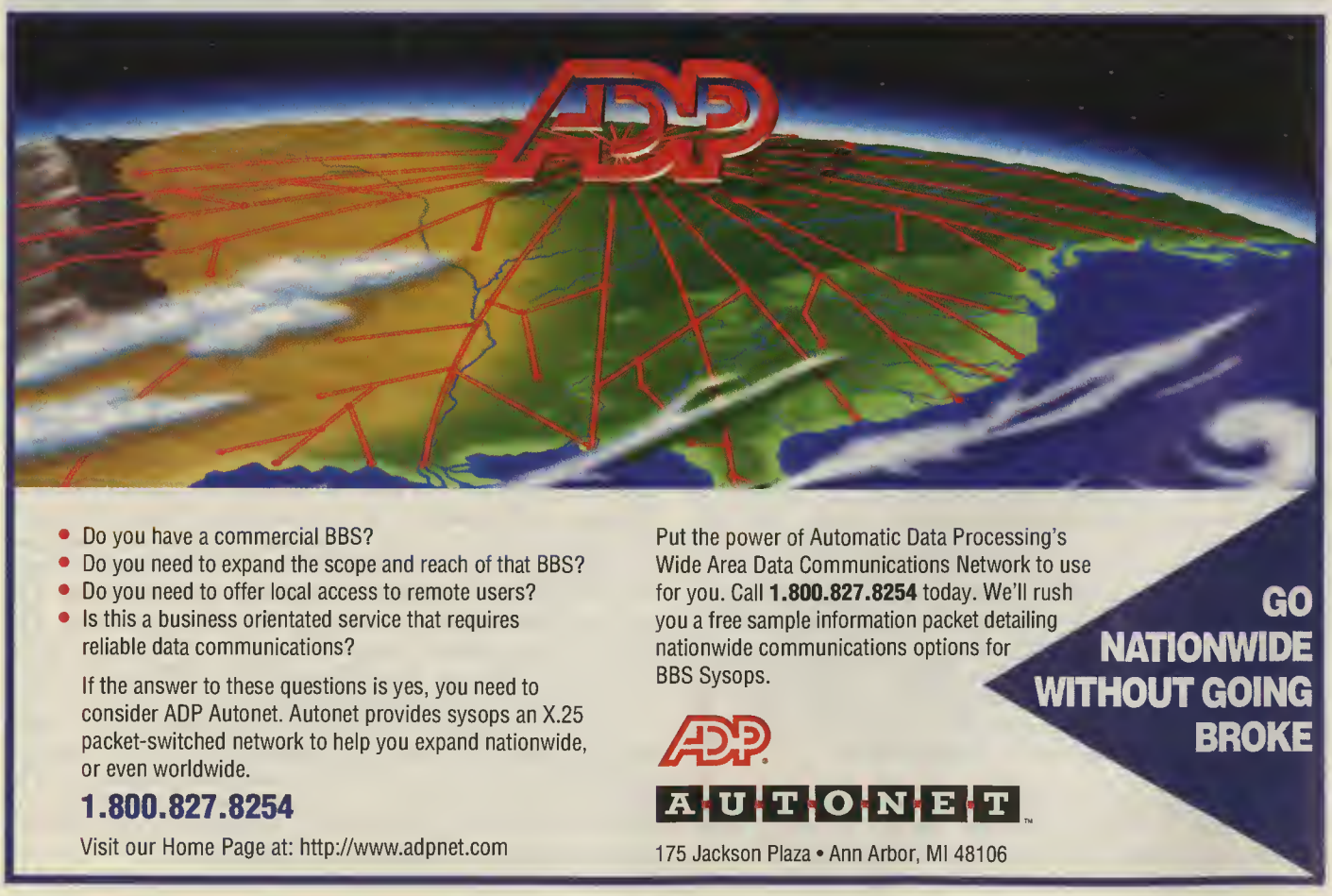
The corpse you see is from The Visible Human Project at the National Library Of Medicine. Basically, a dead man was frozen and MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) and CT Scans were taken of the body along with other anatomical views. This resulted in over 1800 images occupying several gigabytes of data that is being made available to anyone who desires it. You can also now get a CD-ROM of the Visable Human Project at most software stores.

This site allows you to interactively view the body in many different ways. You can choose from either a large or small view depending on the speed of your connection. You can zoom in and out of the body to view the various sections in detail. You can view the body with the head up or down and can rotate your view in any increment you desire to see this amazing and rarely seen view of the human body.

This is kind of weird. I almost felt like I was invading someone's privacy. I also felt at times that I was looking at some well marbled steak. Shiver. Scary, grotesque or interesting, this is something that needs to be seen to be believed. If you're squeamish at the site of blood, don't be afraid. There is none. If you faint at the site of a body, opened for the world to see, you may want to do all you can to avoid this facinating look into the human body.

NUTSITE© OF THE MONTH

Keep those Nutsites coming in! I'm getting close to picking the nuttiest for my special Nutsite column and I don't want anyone to feel left out of this incredible event! Unfortunately, no one sent this one in to me and I had to find it all by my lonesome. I had to have something to fit the gruesome theme of Halloween!



http://www.trident.nettuno.it/~ugly/

THE HORRIBLE SPLATTER PAGE

I had quite a dreadful time trying to figure out if I should put this site here, or in my main Halloween picks above. After a bit of thought and a little more snooping, I figured that if this site didn't qualify as a NutSite, nothing would. I also had to coin a new word to describe what I was seeing. Since "terrific" usually means something particularly excellent, I thought that "putrific" would fit since this site is a particularly putrid place to visit. Having added this word to my custom dictionary, I present this grotesque site for your approval.

My initial reaction to this page was that the background texture looked as though someone scraped up some road-kill and scanned it. Cool for this page, not so cool for the scanner. There are all kinds of treats on this page for the gore-tolerant that will make life on the Web just a little more interesting and colorful, to say the least.

Have you ever wondered what *you* might look like, battered and bloodied? You can send your very own scanned picture off to the "monster o'matic" and have it custom "monsterized" for not only your enjoyment, but for the enjoyment of everyone who visits this totally ghastly and putrific site.

There is also a collection of, and I quote, "The most horrible, gore, nauseabond, ripugnant, scared, bloodly, textures for your Web pages..." This is an understatement. If you really want to cause a little controversy and possibly cause a few people to paint the sidewalk (or their desktop), be sure to check these out. There is also the incredible animated eye page for your displeasure (if you can figure this one out, let me know) along with links to not quite as ghastly horror pages scattered around the Web. *Bon appetit!*

Well, horribly enough, that is all for this month's tour through the horror on the Web. I have these as well as all of my past articles terminally available for your scrutiny at:

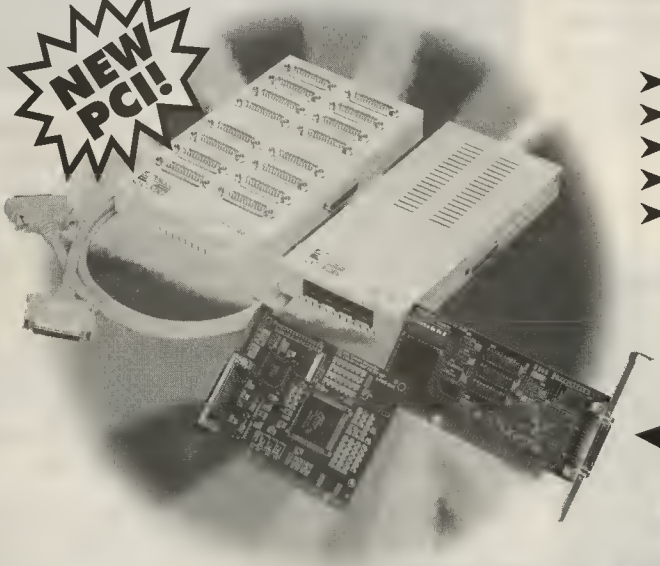
http://www.aquila.com/babbs.bookmarks/

Anyone who has a site that they would like to see in this column or has any comments, good or bad (preferably good) should feel free to e-mail me at:

chris.babb@aquila.com

Happy Haunting!◆

RISC-BASED MULTIPORT CARDS



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PUBLISHING ON THE WEB

by Michael Erwin

Part 9 — SECURITY IN WEB DOCUMENTS

I have been getting e-mail about incorporating some security in your web documents. Well, let's cover some WWW security. There are two basic ways to control access to your documents.

The first is "domain-level" control. This level of access is where the web server rejects or accepts a connection based on the IP address of the requesting browser. You could use this level of access control for an internal company web server. The second level is "user authentication" control, in which the clients must enter user ids and passwords to validate that they have the right to access the requested HTML document. You can use this technique to implement subscriptions in your HTML directory. The downside of "user authentication" is that not all browsers support it. The cool thing is, you can use combinations of domain-level and user authentication access controls.

Before we get started, you need to realize that all of the access control works with your HTML directory tree, not with individual HTML documents. If you need to control access to one individual document, you will need to put that document in a separate directory.

We begin with the access control file, **access.conf** or **access.cnf**. If you are using a NCSA httpd server, this file will be in the "conf" sub-directory. It should look something like Listing 1. Remember that the "#" symbol used in this file is the same as "rem" or remark. So anything in a line starting with a "#" will be ignored by the web server.

LISTING 1

```
#
# ACCESS.CNF
#
# Global access configuration for NCSA
# os2httpd V1.2

<Directory c:/os2httpd>
   Options Indexes
</Directory>

<Directory c:/os2httpd/docs>
   Options Indexes
   AllowOverride All
   <Limit GET>
      order allow,deny
      allow from all
   </Limit>
</Directory>
```

You must set up at least a global access control file like the one in Listing 1 for NCSA-based web servers. This way the server will have at least some defined access control. In this **access.conf** file everyone will have access to every document in your HTML directory tree. The file in Listing 1 is the default access control file in NCSA's server.

Let's work with the "domain-level" of access control to see how all of this works together. Look at Listing 2.

LISTING 2

```
#
# ACCESS.CNF
#
# Domain-Level access configuration for NCSA
# os2httpd
#
<Directory c:/os2httpd/docs/writers>
   Options Indexes
   AllowOverride None
   <Limit GET>
      order deny,allow
      deny from all
      allow from boardwatch.com
   </Limit>
</Directory>
```

Let's break this file down. The first line **<Directory c:/os2httpd/docs/writers>** tells the web server what subdirectory the following attributes refers to, in this case **c:\os2httpd\docs\writers**. Access to anything below **c:\os2httpd\docs\writers** will be limited to only clients that are in the domain `boardwatch.com`.

The next line **Options Indexes** tells the server that it can make an Index of the specified directory if the file **index.html** is not present in the directory. See the May, 1995 issue of Boardwatch for more information about the **index.html** and the **srm.conf** files.

The third line of Listing 2 **AllowOverride None** tells the server not to allow remote override. The fourth line **<Limit GET>** is the start of what the server will allow. This leads to the directive **order deny,allow**. This is changed from the default of **order allow,dent** because we want the web server to check the deny directives first then grant exceptions based on the allow directives. The directive **deny from all** tells the server to deny access to everyone, then check to see if the **allow from boardwatch.com** criteria is being met. If the request is not from a browser run-

Michael lives in Huntington, West Virginia, with his wife Jacqueline and Paxi Baby. (Jackie's Shar-Pei dog.) He has designed, built and administered network systems for over 16 years. Mike has organized and documented his 600-megabyte bag of tricks, tools and voodoo on a CD-ROM entitled, "*The WebMaster's Resource.*" It is available for US**$24.95**, plus US**$2.00** shipping in the United States or US**$5.00** elsewhere; send check or money order to 320 36th Street, Huntington WV 25702-1632. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. For more information **mailto:** `mikee@access.mountain.net`

ning on a boardwatch.com IP address, then access will be denied to documents stored in the directory **c:\os2httpd \docs\writers** or any directory below that directory.

If you wanted several organizations or various sub-domains to have access to a protected directory you could use the following code in your **access.conf** file:

LISTING 3

```
#
# ACCESS.CNF
#
# Domain-Level access configuration for NCSA
# os2httpd

<Directory c:/os2httpd/docs/writers>
   Options Indexes
   AllowOverride None
   <Limit GET>
      order deny,allow
      deny from all
            allow boardwatch.com bbscon.com
another.domain.net
   </Limit>
</Directory>
```

With this **access.cnf** file, the web server will service requests from boardwatch.com, bbscon.com and the sub-domain another.domain.net. But since we included the line **deny from all** our web server will deny everyone else.

You can also use a **.htaccess** file in a specific directory to control access to the directory tree. The **.htaccess** file is simply a text file that resides in the directory you wish to protect. The **.htaccess** file would look something like listing 4.

LISTING 4

```
#
# .htaccess for /htdocs/issues/future
#
   <Limit GET>
      order deny,allow
      deny from all
      allow from boardwatch.com
   </Limit>
```

When our web server gets a request for a file in the directory **/htdocs/issues/future** it will look to see if there is a **.htaccess** file in the directory **/htdocs/issues/future**. If **.htaccess** exists, the server will read it and follow the directives it contains. The sample in Listing 4 will only process requests from a boardwatch.com IP address.

One of the advantages of this type of access control file is that if your service provider allows you to have a public HTML directory inside of your home directory, then you can place a **.htaccess** file in the directory to which you wish to control access. This allows your users to control access to their directories, without them needing access to your web server's configuration directory.

You are probably thinking ***.htaccess*** *is not a standard DOS naming convention. Guess what? Your right! It's a UNIX format. Since the file starts with a period, UNIX considers it a hidden file. If you want to see the hidden files in a directory use the command:* ***ls -la<ENTER>***

You may be saying, "Yeah but I don't use a UNIX-based web server." Well, if you use any of the new web servers, i. e., O'Reilly's WebSite, you can control access using an "Access Control Page" of some sort. For O'Reilly's WebSite software it's in the "WebSite Server Admin" folder.

Since a lot of the new GUI web servers are based somewhat on NCSA's HTTPD server, you will find document access control somewhere in it.

Now back to our regular scheduled program....

After learning to limit document access at the domain level, you will sometime in your webmaster career want to limit access to directory trees to specific individuals. You can control individuals' access in the same way you control access to a BBS, by using user authentication. This is the second way of controlling access to your document directories. The only major drawback to this type of access control is the time it takes to administer the thing.

If you are using an NCSA web server, you will need a program called **htpasswd**. The source code for the program can be obtained from **ftp://ftp.ncsa.uiuc.edu** at NCSA. Follow the instructions for the source code to compile it.

Once you have **htpasswd** run it by typing **htpasswd -c .htpasswdUSERNAME <enter>**. The flag **-c** tells the program to create a **.htpasswd** password file. The program will try to find the USERNAME in the **.htpasswd** file. If it finds the person's USERNAME it will prompt you for their new password. If it doesn't find them in the **.htpasswd** file it will ask you for an initial password for that USERNAME.

Once you have created the file **.htpasswd** and have at least 1 user id in it, look at the addition to our **access.cnf** file shown in listing 5 below:

LISTING 5

```
<Directory /httpd/docs/writers>
   Options Indexes
   AllowOverride None
   AuthUserFile /httpd/conf/.htpasswd
   AuthGroupFile /dev/null
   AuthName Hey You! I need some ID!
   AuthType Basic
   <Limit GET>
      require user writers
   </Limit>
</Directory>
```

The code in Listing 5 tells the web server that the directory **/httpd/docs/writers** is protected. The new settings work as follows.

AuthUserFile tells the web server where the password file is and what it is called. Notice that the password file is *not* in the same directory as the protected documents! You want your password files to be somewhere that only the systems administrator can access.

AuthGroupFile tells the web server that we don't have any groups for this directory. Groups? Yep, groups. You can actually define Groups with members who have access to various directories. More on this one a little later.

AuthName is interpreted to tell the person requesting a protected document "Hey You! I need some ID!" as the prompt for the username & password.

AuthType is currently always set to **Basic**. Basic is currently the only type of authorization available at the time I wrote this. Watch for this to change.

The **<LIMIT>** section tells the web server that access to the directory requires a username of **writers**. If the requesting client doesn't use **writers** as the username, then do not send the requested documents. If the client provides the username **writers** and proper password, then this client has access to the documents in the directory **/httpd/docs/writers**.

Pretty simple, isn't it? But it can get a little confusing. Look at listing 6.

LISTING 6

```
<Directory /httpd/docs/writers>
   Options Indexes
   AllowOverride None
   AuthUserFile /httpd/conf/.htpasswd
   AuthGroupFile /httpd/conf/.htgroup
   AuthName Hey You! I need some ID!
   AuthType Basic
   <Limit GET>
      require group writers
   </Limit>
</Directory>
```

I have made 2 changes in this listing compared to Listing 5. The first change is with the directive **AuthGroupFile**. I set the file name to **/httpd/conf/.htgroup**. This makes the web server look at the file **.htgroup** in the directory of **/httpd/conf/**. It's a good idea to place the **.htpasswd** file and the **.htgroup** file in the same directory. But not where others can get it.

For this authentication to work we need to create a simple text file call **/httpd/conf/.htgroup**. In this simple file, you enter the group definition as follows:

groupname: username1 username2 username3 ... usernameX

For example look at the following sample **.htgroup** file:

writers: jack david gary john mikee
editors: jack david
internal: jack david gary patty roger

In this group file we have defined 3 groups: writers, editors and internal. The usernames of members of each group are placed after the semi-colon and separated with a space. Now we also need to add these users to our password file. i., e., **htpasswd /httpd/conf/.htpasswd jack<enter>** and so on for each user id, not for each group.

You will also need to reboot your web server for the changes to take place. Now when someone tries to access a document in the **/httpd/docs/writers** directory, the web server will ask for a user name. In my case I will type in **mikee** and then my password. The browser sends this information back to the web server. The web server looks to see if I exist in the **writers** group. If I don't, it sends me an authorization failure message. If I do exist in the **writers** group, the web server will then check to see if my password matches the one stored in **.htpasswd** and if it does, it will send me the requested document.

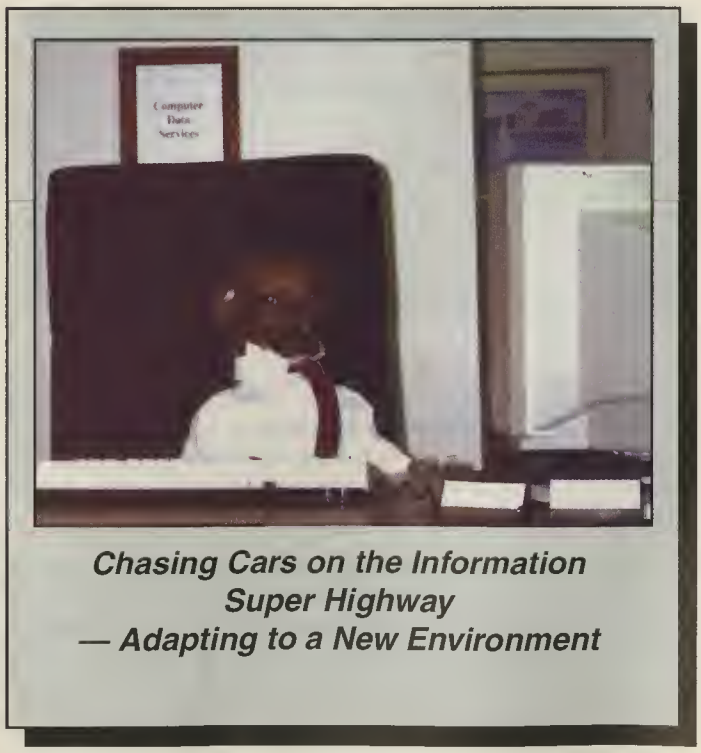
The access control you set in your web server affects what documents it will send to a browser, NOT what an already-logged-in user can do. Just because someone has access to web document directories does not mean that they have to have an actual account on your server.

By now you are saying "Way cool!" aren't you? But wait, you get more! The server will continue to allow you to access files in that protected directory, until either the web server times the connection out or I kill my browser.

Pretty nifty, isn't it? With access control you can open up all kinds of money making opportunities for your web site. You can start making you web server more like a controlled-access BBS. Various access levels. Pay for Play.

Well, that concludes this month's article. Next month we will look more at web server development and web server statistics.

mikee@access.mountain.net◆



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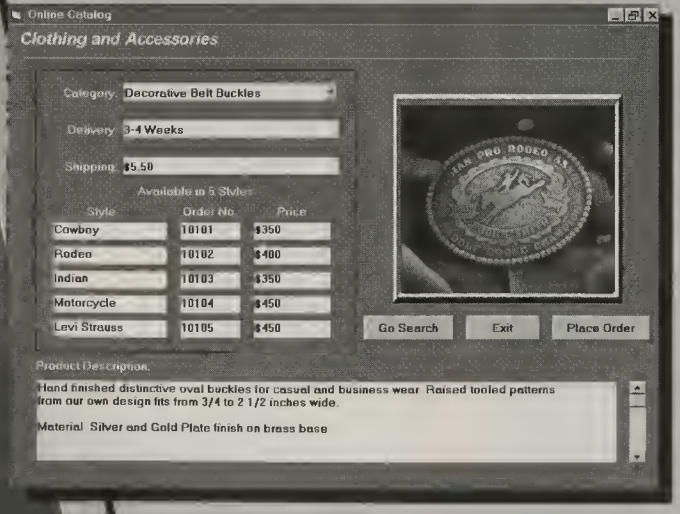

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Annihilator takes full advantage of the new multitasking in Windows 95 or the robust server operations in Windows NT to provide a solution that brings full on-line multimedia to every caller. See how you can use *Annihilator's* built-in remote graphics to provide an exciting multimedia greeting, using familiar JPEG and GIF graphic editors to customize the caller interface.

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- Under *Annihilator,* the entire BBS configuration can be modified even while in full operation, but only by authorized personnel.

Of 32-bit BBS Much Longer

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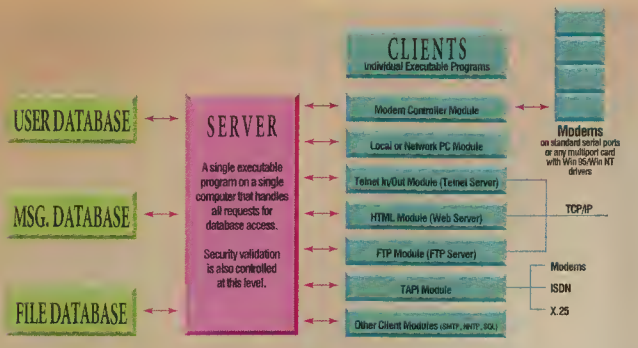

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wcCODE Package – a new high speed, 32-bit development language so powerful that all standard BBS functions are written in it.

Source Code – for total customization of online activity, the wcCODE source for the BBS is also available for purchase (requires wcCODE).

SQL Database Client – provides full remote connectivity to distributed database processing using the SQL language.

Reports Client – reports BBS usage and statistics, and provides a means for manipulation, export and selection of database records using match criteria.

Billing Client – bill callers for any action performed on the BBS, includes report and invoice generation, pre-pay and post-pay models.

Annihilator fully supports all DOS-based doors and includes a program for DOS program redirection to any line. It can be connected to any multi-port serial card that includes drivers for Windows 95 or Windows NT.

Buy The Pre-Release *Annihilator* CD For $49* And Save Up To 75% Off The Purchase Price

Instructions and information on the Pre-Release *Annihilator* CD provides SYSOPS with an inside look into the future of BBS technology.

Purchase of the Pre-Release *Annihilator* CD establishes eligibility for a 75% discount off the manufacturers suggested retail price when *Annihilator* is released later this year.

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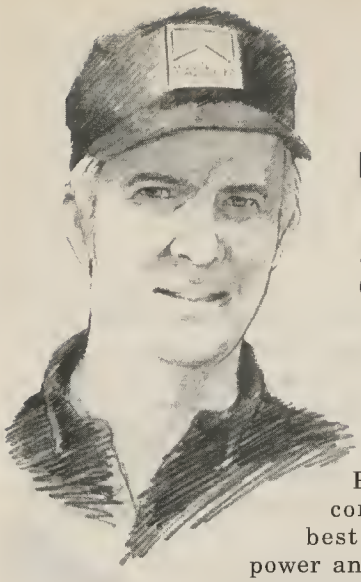

TECHNOLOGY FRONT

by Jim Thompson
Western News Service

CommunityNET OFFERS BBS PACKAGES

Jim Thompson is Managing Editor of Western News Service in Los Angeles, California. He also manages the Marlboro Racing News BBS. CompuServe: **72777,2677**, MCI Mail: **321-4127**, **mailto: jim.thompson @wnsnews.com**

CommunityNET, created by Pulse Inter@ctive, a division of Pulse Research, Inc., continues to be the best example of the power and sophistication of the RIP language. This program provides a newspaper or magazine with all the elements needed to produce an online publication that actually duplicates the layouts, headlines, mastheads, and sections of the printed edition of a paper. (See the July, 1995 issue of ***Boardwatch*** for a full review of CommunityNET.)

This full featured system, originally programmed by Alan McNamee of Advanced Systems Research, represents a dramatic step forward in the online publishing world. Designed by people who know and understand the newspaper industry, CommunityNET provides everything needed to establish a revenue producing online publication. Although the starting price tag of **$5,000** sounds high, it is actually an extremely good value. It allows a newspaper to establish a user-friendly online system with a minimum of effort that should pay for itself in a very short time.

Still, the price can produce sticker shock for most independent sysops. In response to requests for a more affordable system, Pulse Inter@ctive is offering portions of the original system for BBS operators at affordable prices.

According to John Marling, President of Pulse Inter@ctive, "the challenge of offering the packages for sysops is to provide them with value while protecting our newspaper clients. In preparing these products we found that most BBSs are concerned with a specific group or topic and not a geographic area so there should be no real competition for the newspapers. We are committed to protecting our newspaper clients at all cost."

Their ***BBS Direct Product Structure*** is broken into separate modules. The modules are designed to run under TBBS.

At this point, they will not run under any other Bulletin Board System.

THE SYSTEM MODULE is the basic system and is required in order to run all other BBS Direct Products, except THE PRESENTATION GRAPHICS MODULE. It provides rapid menu building, a powerful jump system (similar to CompuServe's GO command), easy image placement and global variables that simplify menu updating. It also includes an ICON/BMP library and sample menu designs. COST: **$495**

This differs from the full CommunityNET program sold to newspapers in that it does not include the **MAINT.EXE** program for nightly updating of the system and it cannot be used as the core of an automated newspaper-like system. It also does not include the hardware and BBS software that comes with the newspaper package.

THE TEXT MODULE is a full-featured text reader/browser. It includes the ability to place one JPEG image with an associated text entry. The main features include multi-column text and automatic formatting of text style sheets to control the look of the

final presentation. There is also a keyword search facility for finding specific documents. The BBS version allows for only one photo per document while the full newspaper version allows for multiple photos. COST: **$295**

THE AD MODULE provides full catalog and ad creation functions along with photos and graphics. Style sheets allow for a custom look. This is a wonderful environment for an online shopping system. COST: **$395**

THE PHOTO MODULE allows for photo/graphic catalogs and display functions. Each entry can have as many as 12 photos with captions. There is also an auto array function and the ability to download photos. COST: **$295**

THE PRESENTATION GRAPHICS MODULE provides the ability to create three dimensional line and bar charts with up to 37 data elements. This is great for system statistics. COST: **$395**

THE PERSONALS MODULE allows the sysop to create a personal ads or dating system with photos, text and audio (WAV) playback ability. A search facility allows for keyword search in text files to find people with similar interests. There is also a private e-mail and messaging system that is perfect for use with TBBS' Ultrachat. COST: **$295**

Pulse Inter@active will also be offering a series of meetings/seminars for their newspaper clients so they can exchange information. "This will allow us to communicate directly with our clients to help them with marketing and technical support issues. It will also provide a forum for our users to discuss elements that have been successful and some of the challenges of running an online system. We plan on holding these gatherings approximately four times a year," said Marling.

Pulse Inter@active has created a rich graphical environment for TBBS sysops. It is easy to install and use and provides a wealth of functionality. ◆

CONTACTS:

CommunityNET
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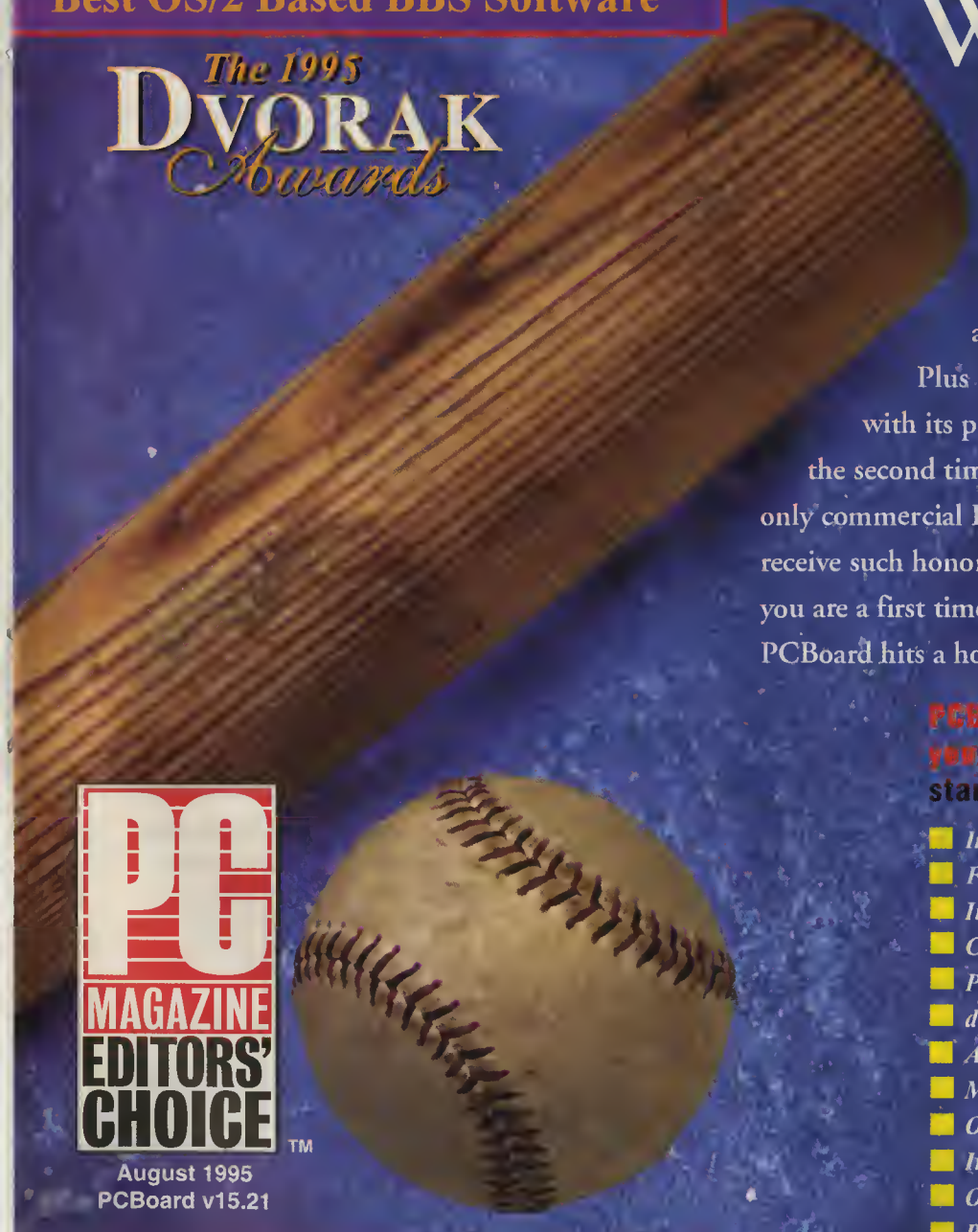

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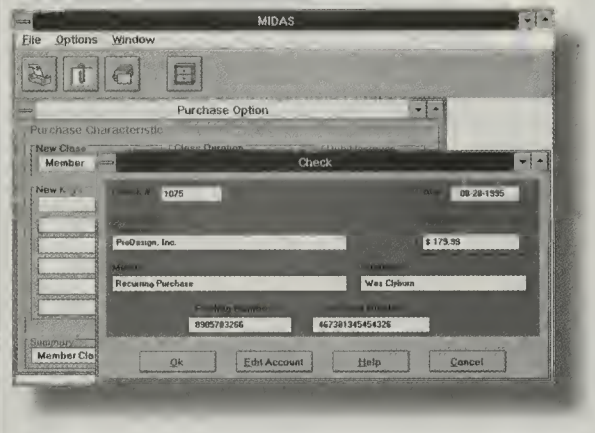

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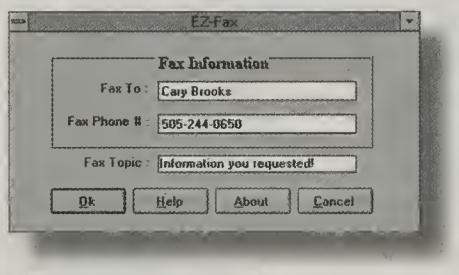

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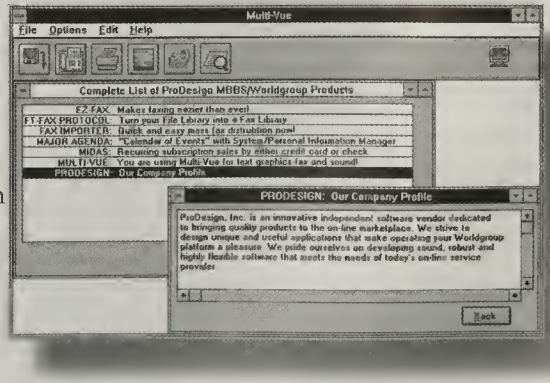

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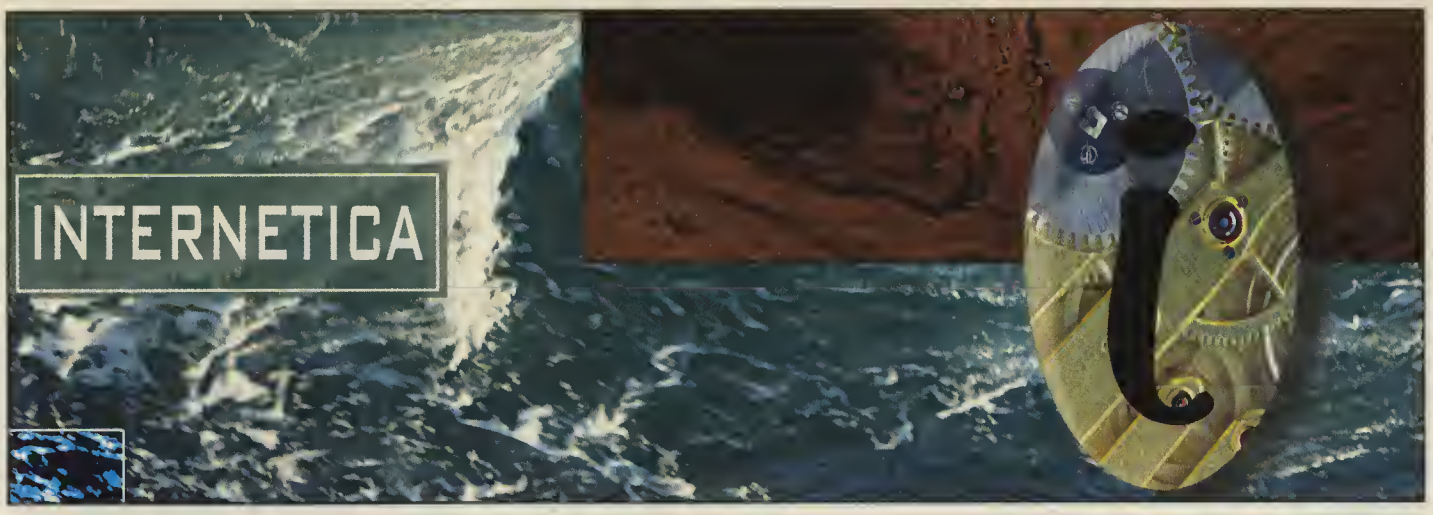

CYBERWORLD MONITOR by Frank Sowa

CMU'S CYBERPORN STUDY: "RIMM JOB" OR NET-CONTROL CONSPIRACY?

Marvin A. Sirbu, Jr., is a well-known researcher in Washington D.C. He has been called to testify on telecommunications issues many times. He provided assistance on the Senate version of the Telecommunications Reform Act of 1995, to which the Exon Amendment was added. Sirbu, a Carnegie Mellon University faculty member, is an internationally-renowned expert on telecommunications policy, telecommunications and online network regulatory policy research.

Sirbu is one of the leading analysts of the impact of AT&T's divestiture, and has been a strong advocate for shaping government regulation to favor the Regional Bells. Sirbu is the chairman of CMU's Information Networking Institute, which was set up with a single-source grant from Bellcore — the research lab of the combined Regional Bells — "to develop programs and government policy to meet some of their specific needs with respect to information networking education."

David Banks is a well-known associate professor of statistics at CMU. Banks' specialty is nonparametric and Bayesian inference, but he has "an interest in almost any application of statistics for data analysis." In recent years, he and former Mellon Bank chief economist Jake Haulk have formed a "Conservative Government Policy Study Group" where Banks moonlights as an independent consultant. The group's purpose is "to review government and economic policy issues from a conservative viewpoint." Most recently, they concluded an economic study on what impact would be felt by the City of Pittsburgh if the Pirates' new owners moved the team out of town.

A few months ago, no one would have questioned the scholarly methodologies of Sirbu and Banks. They were seen as eminent experts in their respective fields. But that was before they became faculty advisors to a project begun by CMU staff researcher Martin (Marty) Rimm, then a 29-year-old undergraduate at CMU. Banks, Sirbu and Rimm are now under investigation by a three-member CMU faculty committee to examine whether ethical and academic guidelines were breached.

THE CYBERPORN STUDY

Near the end of 1994, an obtuse study performed by Rimm under the guidance of Sirbu and Banks made local headlines. *Marketing Pornography on the Information Superhighway* was presented as scholarly research to the faculty of Carnegie Mellon. It contained enough statistical analysis (which Banks reviewed before its presentation) that university officials decided to search for ways to filter access to the objectionable "pornographic material" from CMU's Internet-backbone-linked computer system. CMU has since established a number of filtering concepts, some of which are available for purchase through the university's technology transfer center.

CMU students objected. They felt that monitoring what they were looking at on the Internet and redlining certain parts of USENET was an invasion of their privacy and a violation of their civil rights. Some called the Electronic Frontier Foundation and the American Civil Liberties Union to join the foray. Soon the legal issues of restricting student access to the Internet became prominent stories in a number of national publications, wire services, and network news departments. The sensational value of such a "pornography story" and the "Carnegie Mellon Cyberporn Study" (as it came to called) definitely had ratings appeal.

The study stated that 83.5 percent of the images in USENET newsgroups are "explicit materials and

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child pornography," and that such areas were heavily frequented by computer users — many of whom were under 21. Rimm later stated that his user statistics were based on an unannounced survey of CMU's user records of nearly 3,000 students, staff, faculty, and faculty children that was conducted by Rimm, Sirbu, Banks and CMU research assistants. Rimm's personal observations of over 10,000 explicit computer images were also cited.

Soon Rimm found himself in the international limelight. Even though his attempts to be published in scholarly journals that deal with the subject matter were rejected, the legal ramifications of CMU's actions attracted the *Georgetown Law Journal*, which published the 85-page report. Within weeks, Rimm was cited by Ted Koppel on his Nightline Show. He made all three network television prime time newscasts and was front-page material for 136 of America's largest newspapers.

Ultimately *Time Magazine* (who knows that sex-appeal brings in readership more than anything else) opted for a cover story with sleazy man-rapes-computer pictures dreamt up by Time's editors.

The "Carnegie Mellon Cyberporn Study" was big news. It even made the international market as a headliner in London, Stockholm and Paris. The media blitz surrounding the much-touted study made other scholars question its validity.

SCHOLARS CRITICIZE THE STUDY

Two professors at Vanderbilt University, Donna Hoffman and Thomas Novak, published their own study which was conducted with a statistical base similar to the CMU study. Hoffman and Novak found that explicit materials in USENET newsgroups amounted to less than one-half of one percent of all traffic. They said the CMU study grossly exaggerated the extent of pornography on the Internet, and in their critique questioned the "validity techniques and the motives" of the CMU study.

In other words, Rimm's study, conducted under the supervision and control of well-renowned policy researchers and faculty advisors Sirbu and Banks, was an outright and poorly-designed sham.

ENTER THE EXON AMENDMENT

In the meantime, Jim Exon, a Senator from Nebraska who says he doesn't use the Internet himself, also caught wind of the report through Christian Coalition and Anti-Pornography groups (his financial supporters), who had been given copies of the Rimm report. These groups went ballistic with the study. According to Dorn Checkley of the Pittsburgh Coalition Against Pornography, they "began monitoring the Internet and the adult bulletin boards nationwide, to identify which services contain any of the sexual materials in question, and to report them to the proper authorities." But, as of yet, little could be done legally, because there was no specific law to deal with this crisis. It has always been a gray area of the law to establish, "What is obscene?"

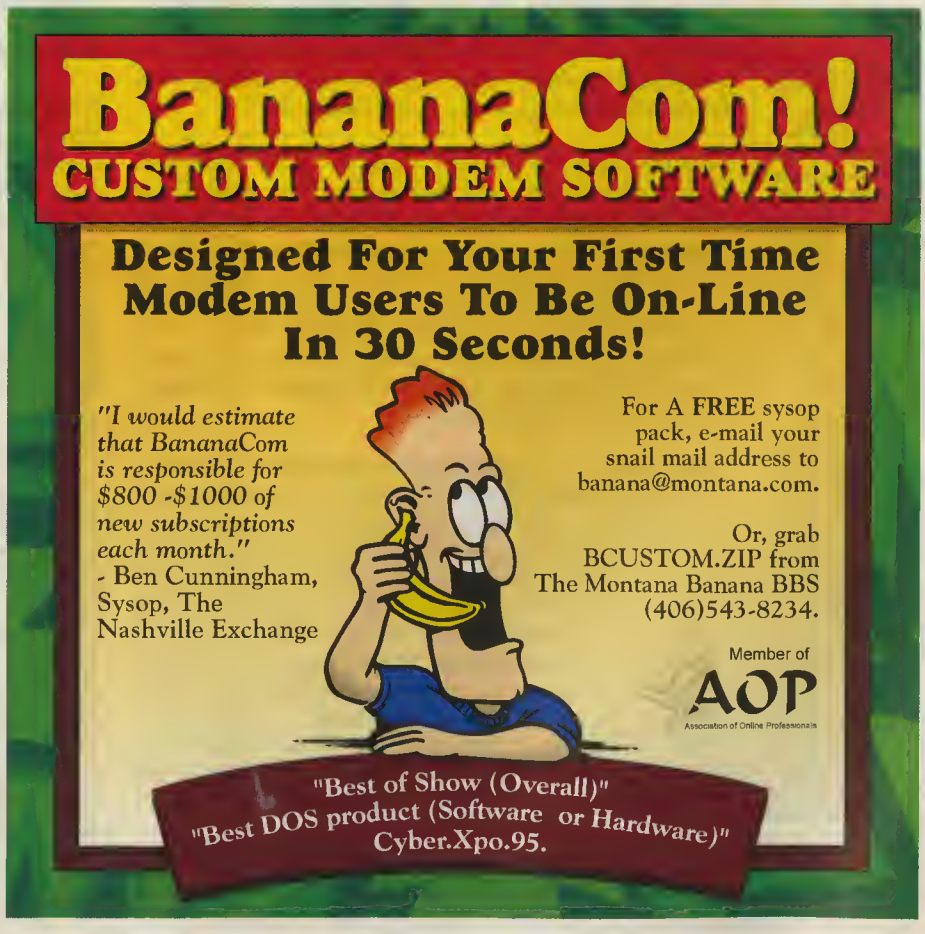
Senator Exon became the point-man in a move to get some laws on the books regarding online pornography. Exon made the Carnegie Mellon Cyberporn Study, with the names of well-known CMU government telecommunications policy researchers on the cover, the cornerstone of his arguments to save his beleagured Communications Decency Act Amendment. Finally, in a last-ditched effort, he had a friend download about 1,000 pictures from various BBS services and the Internet. He bound these in a blue 3-ring binder and hand carried it from desk to desk in the Senate chambers in the days before the vote, so that all the Senators could peruse for themselves what is "really out there" in cyberspace. Senate passed the Exon Amendment 84-16.

After the successful vote, Exon's backers invited Rimm to appear before the Senate Judiciary Committee in July at a hearing on "kids and computer porn," to "help them put a handle on the horrific problem of online pornography." But about then, scrutiny of Rimm's past by Internet users began to surface and the hoax began to unwind.

Sirbu continues to support Rimm and his methodologies, citing "people with a political agenda" as the culprits. Nevertheless, the politically correct Senate Judicial Committee withdrew the offer for Rimm to appear at the hearings, and CMU has begun to take a harsher look at Sirbu, Banks and Rimm.

CMU INVESTIGATING RIMM, BANKS AND SIRBU

The Internet became a site to find out all kinds of interesting information about Rimm. It appears that in 1981 Rimm, then a 16-year-old in Atlantic City, purported to show that 64% of his



school's students had illegally and illicitly gambled at the city's casinos. In that effort Rimm sought maximum publicity as well. The survey was used by the New Jersey legislature to support a move to raise the gambling age from 18 to 21. All the while, the casinos strongly criticized the study as superficial and grossly inaccurate.

Rimm also authored two books. His novel *American Playground* concerned experiences in and around casinos, explicitly fantasizing some of the lustier aspects of the trade. *The Pornographer's Handbook: How to Exploit Women, Dupe Men & Make Lots of Money*, was a step-by-step handbook offering practical advice on how to effectively market pornographic images.

CONSEQUENCES OF BAD STATISTICS

The Exon Amendment is now in committee again for resolution. That's scary. The amendment will come out of committee and be voted upon, and the public will never get to see what the final version says until it is published. At CMU, the faculty review board has begun its examination of how the cyberporn study came into being. The private internal review board does not expect to publicize its findings. Rimm, in a recently published Sue Zeidler article in Pittsburgh's *City Paper*, calls the review a "witchhunt" to discredit him. He said, "I'm astonished that those who collected the data are being attacked rather than those who peddle it." I approached Rimm to comment for this article, but he has now hired an attorney and has been advised not to discuss the study in any way with the public.

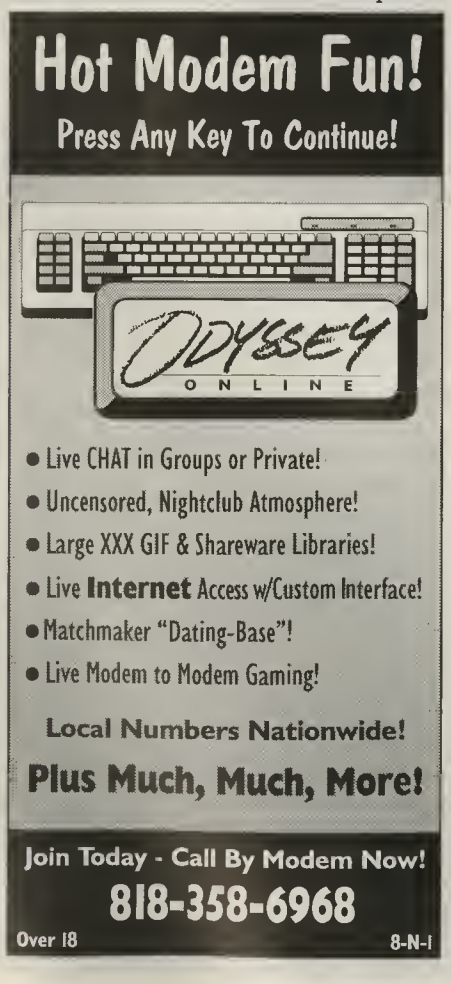
Sirbu and Banks were also unavailable for comment.

Which leads me to ask some pertinent questions about the Carnegie Mellon study:

Were there hidden motives in getting the report widely circulated and published? Since undergraduates rarely have the freedom to act on such research studies entirely without faculty direction, did Sirbu's ties to Bellcore, and the Regional Bells play any role in the outcome? Certainly, the Baby Bells who are trying to control the legislation of the Information Superhighway would find it beneficial if smaller online players were forced by regulation and liabilities out of the market. Did Banks' ties to a Conservative Policy Group shape the way he looked at Rimm's statistics? Did CMU's ability to design "porno" filters and sell patent rights have anything to do with the publicity its student's report received?

Was Rimm a simple undergraduate researcher following faculty orders and doing what he was told? Or did Rimm seek self-aggrandizement, which he got through wide release of the study? Did he act alone, or was it, as he defends, a joint project in conjunction with his and his faculty advisors every step of the way? Who introduced Rimm's study to the Senate during the Telecommunications Deregulation Act hearings, so it could become the cornerstone of the Exon Amendment? What were Rimm's motives? Did Rimm expect to increase the value of his *Pornographer's Handbook* with the results of the study and its name recognition?

Maybe now that the summer of pornography hearings has ended, the Senate can begin reconvening hearings to get to the bottom of this sham perpetrated at a highly respected university? ◆



OTHER PERSPECTIVES OF PORN ON THE NET

Professors Donna Hoffman and Thomas Novak have published their detailed critique of "Marketing Pornography on the Information Superhighway" at

http://www2000.ogsm.vanderbilt.edu/rimm.cgi

Their critique of *Time* magazine's article can be found at

http://www2000.ogsm.vanderbilt.edu/dewitt.cgi

USENET READERSHIP STATISTICS - JUNE 1995:

SEX-RELATED NEWSGROUPS

Mr. Brian Reid of **mailto:reid@decwrl.dec.com** publishes a formidable monthly analysis of USENET traffic in the newsgroups `news.lst`, `news.groups` and `news.admin.misc` under the subject header **USENET READERSHIP**. While it is a notable effort, a few caveats are in order lest someone wave this report at Congress as "factual":

Some 351 Internet sites which receive USENET participated in the survey. The total population of sites which receive USENET is counted in the millions, so this sample may well be statistically unrepresentative of the entire population. Also, the survey monitored only 1345 newsgroups out of the estimated 20,000-plus that are available worldwide. Finally, the participating sites volunteered for Reid's project, thereby skewing the sample.

Reid's estimates of worldwide readership should be taken with grains of rock salt; his methodology, like Rimm's, has received its share of criticism.

Cautions aside, here are selected statistics on The 40 Most Popular News Groups in Reid's sample. (p.68) Note that `alt.sex.stories`, ranked number two out of 1345 newsgroups, was patronized by 3.0% of all users who read the sampled groups.

40 MOST POPULAR

USENET NEWSGROUPS

(From Brian Reid's USENET READERSHIP report for June, 1995)

Popularity by Estimated total number of readers worldwide

	Estimated total number of people who read the group, worldwide.	Actual number of readers in sampled population	Propagation: how many sites receive this group at all	Recent traffic (messages per month)	Recent traffic (megabytes per month)	Share: % of newsrders who read this group.	
1	1413626	3270	90%	41	0.6	5.9%	news.announce.newusers
2	710271	1643	51%	7737	47.1	3.0%	alt.sex.stories
3	481584	1114	56%	4092	5.4	2.0%	alt.tv.simpsons
4	473802	1096	35%	3436	20.0	2.0%	alt.sex.voyeurism
5	459104	1062	83%	4357	6.6	1.9%	comp.lang.c
6	450890	1043	36%	3407	13.8	1.9%	alt.sex.exhibitionism
7	450026	1041	80%	33891	50.4	1.9%	misc.jobs.offered
8	400311	926	37%	3282	79.5	1.7%	alt.binaries.pictures.erotica.blondes
9	351461	813	42%	8182	131.7	1.5%	alt.binaries.pictures.supermodels
10	340653	788	29%	2	0.0	1.4%	alt.sex.breasts
11	339789	786	40%	5124	36.9	1.4%	alt.sex.pictures
12	328116	759	49%	2833	2.2	1.4%	alt.sex.wizards
13	324658	751	72%	32	0.1	1.4%	rec.arts.startrek.info
14	320335	741	46%	-	-	1.3%	alt.sex.wantedalt.sex.wizards
15	309095	715	81%	5475	7.3	1.3%	comp.lang.c++
16	308231	713	71%	5097	7.4	1.3%	rec.arts.startrek.current
17	303908	703	88%	155	1.6	1.3%	news.announce.newgroups
18	293100	678	60%	3325	2.9	1.2%	alt.internet.services
19	292235	676	50%	2724	100.6	1.2%	alt.binaries.pictures.misc
20	290074	671	56%	10772	11.5	1.2%	alt.fan.rush-limbaugh
21	287048	664	73%	606	2.0	1.2%	rec.food.recipes
22	278834	645	76%	130	0.4	1.2%	comp.os.linux.announce
23	277105	641	33%	4817	61.8	1.2%	alt.sex.pictures.female
24	270620	626	76%	16345	23.0	1.1%	misc.jobs.contract
25	270620	626	47%	1273	1.1	1.1%	alt.sex.motss
26	260245	602	43%	1186	2.8	1.1%	alt.binaries.pictures.erotica.d
27	255490	591	58%	1037	1.7	1.1%	alt.dcom.telecom
28	251167	581	62%	7623	9.4	1.1%	alt.folklore.urban
29	247276	572	73%	6536	9.6	1.0%	rec.arts.movies
30	243818	564	55%	921	2.4	1.0%	alt.binaries.pictures.d
31	242521	561	71%	7953	10.6	1.0%	soc.singles
32	241656	559	49%	2531	74.0	1.0%	alt.binaries.pictures.utilities
33	236036	546	58%	4042	6.7	1.0%	alt.romance
34	228687	529	60%	1385	2.0	1.0%	alt.bbs.internet
35	228255	528	73%	5945	7.5	1.0%	comp.os.linux.misc
36	217015	502	70%	613	0.3	0.9%	comp.answers
37	216583	501	23%	6736	204.8	0.9%	alt.binaries.pictures.erotica.amateur.female
38	214421	496	77%	6193	8.8	0.9%	comp.os.ms-windows.misc
39	213124	493	42%	2002	21.3	0.9%	alt.pantyhose
40	211395	489	70%	285	1.6	0.9%	alt.sources

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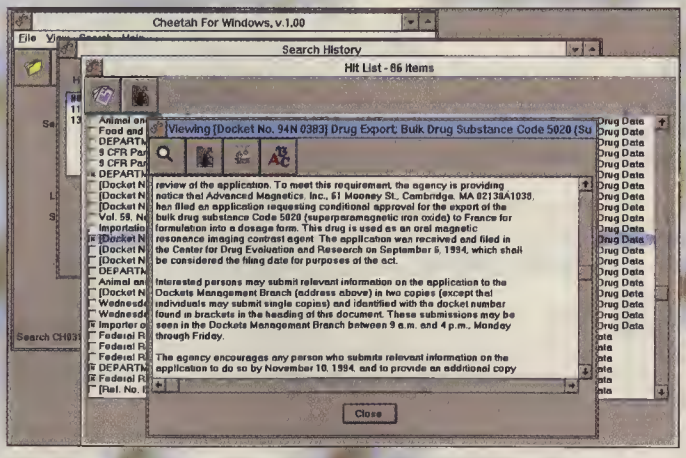

Screen shot from APDI's new Cheetah for Worldgroup Product

APDI's Cheetah product is the on-line industry's fastest and most powerful full text search and retrieval program. Search one or multiple databases using Boolean and proximity search phrases. Megabytes of data can be searched in fractions of seconds. You can take advantage of Cheetah on your system running at APDI's Service Center or you can buy the package to run on your in-house system. Cheetah is compatible with virtually all popular BBS programs including a new version for Galacticomm's Worldgroup!

President Mark Burnett in one of APDI's Computer Rooms

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Scott Brinker, President, Galacticomm, Inc.

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Jeff Kiely, CompuServe Network Systems

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DR. BOB by Bob Rankin

NET-HAPPENINGS' AUTHOR GLEASON SACKMAN

Bob Rankin, known as "Doctor Bob" in the online world, is a writer, computer programmer and consultant who enjoys exploring the Internet and sharing the fruit of his experience with others. Bob is co-driver of The Internet TourBus mailing list and author of "*Accessing The Internet By E-Mail*," which has circulated widely on the Internet and is available in 15 languages. For info, send **mailto:** `BobRankin@MHV.net` or via the web at **http://csbh.mhv.net/~bobrankin**

Gleason Sackman really knows what's happenin' online. But he's got an unfair advantage... he gets paid to surf the Net. Part of Sackman's job as coordinator of SENDIT (North Dakota's K-12 Telecom Network) is to beat the cyberbushes for nifty educational resources. And all the other good stuff he finds in the process goes into Net-Happenings, the very popular Internet mailing list which he moderates.

Sackman is a 53 year-old father of three who taught high-school biology and human anatomy for 20 years before learning the facts of life online. Toward the end of his teaching career, Sackman started a BBS to distribute educational software to North Dakota schools, and then began serving as a consultant for SENDIT, a gateway between the North Dakota K-12 community and the Internet. He has worked full time for SENDIT since 1992.

Gleason Sackman, Professional Netsurfer

"At the time I was teaching," Sackman says, "I had heard the term 'Internet' but that's about all I knew about it. Talk about having NO learning curve!" I recently chatted with Gleason Sackman about his enviable job, the Net-Happenings project and his Internet philosophy.

***BR**: Gleason, tell me how Net-Happenings got started.*

GS: Net-Happenings started in May of 1993 as a result of my cross-posting to several other mailing lists. Prior to that time, I subscribed to many different lists in an effort to find K-12 related sources. As I began to find these resources, I noticed that this info was not available on some of the other lists that I subscribed to. So, I began cross-posting to several of the lists where I thought the info would have the greatest value.

As time went on, I was cross-posting more and more info to these lists, and it was suggested that I start my own posting list in order to cut down on the list traffic. I got in touch with the folks at InterNIC Information Services, and they agreed to provide the disk space, listserv and tech support for Net-Happenings.

***BR**: How many people subscribe to Net-Happenings?*

GS: Currently about 11,000, but the list is also available as a USENET newsgroup — `comp.internet.net-happenings` — and on the Web at MIDNet — `http://www.mid.net/net`

***BR**: Why do you do it, and what kind of commitment does Net-Happenings require of you?*

GS: Actually, what I do is part of my "real" job, which is to surf the net for K-12 resources. I currently spend about 5 hours per day on Net-Happenings, and average about 1000 e-mail messages per day.

The equipment that I use also helps to make my job easier. I do most of my work on a NeXT workstation, and usually have 6-7 windows open at any given time. This allows me to keep track of incoming e-mail, listservs, newsgroups, etc., and allows me to quickly decide to post, store, reject, etc.

***BR**: How many sources do you monitor to get NH material? Does a good chunk of it come from readers vs. what you find while surfing?*

GS: I currently monitor 60-65 listservs and about 45-50 newsgroups. When I first started, almost all of the info I posted came from these sources. However, since the list has gained in popularity, I would guess that about 60% of my info is sent to me via e-mail.

The MIDnet web site has also increased the amount of info being sent to me. On average, I receive about 25-30 different postings a day from the web site.

***BR**: You've become something of an online celebrity due to the popularity of Net-Happenings. Tell me about your favorite Internet heros, mentors or doers-of-good-deeds.*

GS: I have to give credit to John December and Scott Yanoff, who helped me out greatly while I was getting acquainted with the Internet.

***BR**: How did they help you? Was it just stuff they had written or more personal interaction?*

GS: It was more on a personal level - giving me tips on where to find items, lists in general, etc.

***BR**: You cover a lot of ground in your N-H postings. Is there any way for readers to filter the information they receive?*

GS: There are several sub-lists of net-happenings (`net-happenings-digest`, `net-sites-digest`, `net-events`, `net-misc`, `net-zines`) so people can subscribe at a level that they choose.

There was getting to be a lot of traffic on the regular list, so the sub-lists were set up for those folks that only wanted web/gopher, or emag/ejournals, or conferences, or miscellaneous items. So far I'm undecided on whether to keep them or not. It really has not helped traffic on the list. People just keep subscribing!

Also, each posting is labelled with tags like **BOOK>**, **FEDGOVT>**, **GOPHER>**, **WWW>**, etc., so people can filter at that level as well.

***BR**: Do you have any other irons in the fire, now that you've earned your stripes?*

GS: I am currently working on some other options with the list. The most current one is to start another list called `net-ads`, which will contain advertising announcements.

***BR**: Maybe a book in the offing?*

GS: It's a thought, and that's about all the further I've gotten with it.

***BR**: How has the Internet changed your everyday life?*

GS: It has put me in contact with folks from around the world. One of the things I like about going to conferences is that I can put a face to the name I see floating across the screen.

***BR**: Any favorite online hangouts?*

GS: Not really, since I don't have extra time to spend at any one site.

***BR**: What Internet service would you miss most if it went away tomorrow?*

GS: E-mail and the web!! Don't know if I could survive the withdrawal!

***BR**: I see your e-mail address lands you in the "edu" camp. Does the commercial takeover of the Internet concern you?*

GS: Not as much as it used to. The commercial aspect will add to the viability of the net and keep it going.

***BR**: Internet culture seems to demand that you give something away for free in order to be taken seriously. Will N-H continue indefinitely as a non-commercial freebie?*

GS: I'll keep it free for as long as I can, which at the current time, looks like it will be forever.

***BR**: The Internet drastically lowers the barriers to world-wide publishing. Do you think the corporate media giants have reason to fear?*

GS: Only if they don't know how to fit into the net picture.

***BR**: What's your take on intellectual property, copyrights, etc.?*

GS: I'm not sure if the copyright issue will ever be resolved, since so many folks want a piece of the action, whether it be "real or virtual."

***BR**: With the rapid expansion of the Net, are we facing an electronic traffic jam in the near future?*

GS: I believe so. As more and more folks get on the net, especially at the K-12 level, traffic will become even worse than it is now. Some of the sites I check on a regular basis have become somewhat slow since there are a lot of folks "hitting" them. Of course, having your info posted in `net-happenings` doesn't help traffic much at all!

***BR**: Al Gore's father masterminded the U.S. Interstate highway system, and now Junior has his eyes on repaving the Infobahn with taxpayer money. Do we need the government involved in Internet development?*

"As more folks get on the Net, especially at the K-12 level, traffic will become even worse than it is now."

GS: Yes, especially if we want to make the net available to the education community. I suspect that most K-12 schools do not have the funding and personnel to get and maintain an Internet connection, particularly if they want IP at the desktop. Even dial-up access can be expensive.

***BR**: What are the best N-H archive /search sites?*

GS: The best archive is at **http://www.mid.net/net** — the MIDnet site. They provide searches by title, subject, keyword, etc. There's also an online form to submit entries to N-H.

***BR**: How old are your kids? Do they surf the net? If so, how you deal with monitoring what they access?*

GS: My three boys are old enough so I don't have to monitor! Their ages are 27, 23, and 19, with the two youngest being in college.

***BR**: What's in store for the future of N-H?*

GS: Further expansion with different formats (html, etc.), maybe some additional lists.

***BR**: Have you found any personally valuable net sites that replace "real world" services, such as airline/hotel reservation, stock market quotes, etc.?*

GS: I'm sure that I've probably posted some good sites, but I really haven't checked any out in great detail. Maybe if I could do the list "full-time."◆

CONNECTING WITH GLEASON SACKMAN

mailto:`sackman@plains.nodak.edu` or **mailto:**`sackman@sendit.nodak.edu`

US Mail : 226 IACC, N.D. State University, Fargo, ND 58105

Net-Happenings Web Site: **http://**`www.mid.net/net`

HotList Of K-12 Internet School Sites: **http://**`www.ndsu.nodak.edu/k12`

To subscribe to the Net-Happenings mailing list, send e-mail to `majordomo@is.internic.net` with a blank subject and **subscribe net-happenings** in the body of the message. To receive any of the net-happenings sub-lists, enter **subscribe xxx** in the body instead, where "xxx" is one of: **net-happenings-digest**, **net-sites-digest**, **net-events**, **net-misc** or **net-zines**.◆

(Durand)
COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

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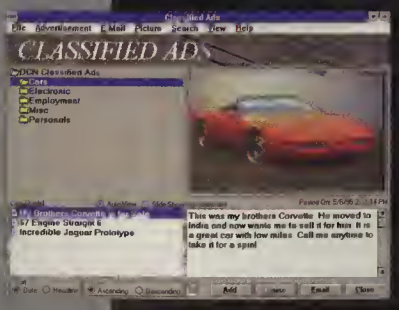

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CONSUMMATE WINSOCK APPS

by Forrest Stroud

It's amazing how quickly Winsock applications have been improving of late. Two months ago I wrote about an app called CuteFTP that was adequate but not exceptional. Like many other apps, CuteFTP has been in serious development since then — in fact, it has gone from second best to second to none in its class by capitalizing on its competitors' weaknesses and its own strengths. Apps across the board are rapidly adding new features and fixing old bugs. All have been in serious preparation for the countdown to Windows 95 on August 24th. In all cases, I'd have to say that we users definitely benefit the most as we reap the benefits of each developer's desire to be the best. With this in mind, let's start reaping the benefits of this month's apps.

The applications reviewed here and many more are available on Stroud's Consummate Winsock Apps List at **http://cwsapps.texas.net** and at The Consummate Winsock Archive, **http://homepage.eznet.net/~rwilloug/cwa.html**

Forrest H. Stroud is a senior at The University of Texas at Austin. He is currently pursuing a degree and career in Information Systems and Data Communications Management. Stroud can be reached at **mailto:Neuroses@mail.utexas.edu**

This month I'll review some apps that will undoubtedly set the standard in their respective categories. In the HTML editors department, HotDog currently offers the most features and is the easiest to use of any HTML editor that I have reviewed. Without question, soon all HTML editors will have similar features, but for now this is the web development tool to have. With so many new users starting to create their own web pages, an intuitive interface and ease of use will be critical to any HTML editor's success.

Another app that has become the consummate client in its class is the newsreader Agent. Its sibling, Free Agent, has garnered quite a bit of attention in the last several months, and this commercial release of the free version brings even more features to the table. As in the HTML editors category, the battles that are likely to ensue will be fierce. In other areas, several new apps fill the niche markets that are left in the trail of the web browsers, newsreaders, mail clients, and HTML editors — e-Mail Notify for Windows 95 is a must-have client for users with resource-hogging mail clients, and Turnpike is a new net suite that offers a new look to this competitive industry. With all the new apps and the constant improvements made to old ones, it's going to be difficult to keep up. But once again, thanks to The Consummate Winsock Apps column, all the information you need is right at your fingertips.

AGENT

Agent, Forte's industrial-strength, commercial newsreader, is a step above and beyond its freeware sibling, Free Agent. Agent retains Free Agent's unique interface and extensive collection of features as well as its recently added speed infusion.

Desc: The introductory commercial release of Forte's newsreader client
Pros: Tons of features, easy customization, extensive online help available
Cons: Currently lacks advanced sorting/filtering, kill lists, and a few additional features
Location: **ftp://ftp.forteinc.com/pub/forte/agent/**
Filename: **AGENT??.ZIP**
Status: Commercial software — **$40**
Company: Forte Inc.

So just why is Agent better than Free Agent? Currently, the only real difference in Agent is the implementation of a multilingual spelling checker, but for many typists (like myself) this alone is reason enough to fork over the registration fee. An American English dictionary comes preloaded with Agent; English (International), Italian, Spanish, German, and French dictionaries are also freely available from the Forte FTP site. What really sets Agent apart is the features that will be integrated into the client over the next couple of months. Enhanced e-mail functionality, user-defined folders, kill lists, advanced sorting and filtering, and import/export newsrc files are all soon to be added features.

Agent is attractively priced at **$40** and includes six months of free support, free interim upgrades, and an optional free shrink-wrapped copy of Agent 1.00 when available. Without a doubt, Agent is already the best newsreader available on the net, incorporating features lacking in other news clients and with the speed necessary to push it even further ahead. Agent, like Netscape and Pegasus Mail, is an absolute, must-have net app, and at **$40**, even I can afford it!

HOTDOG

Desc: An excellent HTML editor for all users
Pros: Excellent interface, every HTML command imaginable, very easy to use
Cons: File sizes limited to 32 Kb, yearly support contract needed for major updates
Location: **ftp://ftp.sausage.com/pub/**
Filename: **HOTDOG??.EXE**
Status: Commercial Software - Free 30 day evaluation. Standard version - **$29.95**
Company: Sausage Software

Now this is the kind of application I like — almost every feature I could ever possibly want and more! HotDog is an extremely well-designed HTML editor

that allows you to use every HTML command possible as well as your own user-defined commands. Even advanced HTML formatting is made simple with HotDog, including tables, forms, background images, custom text colors, and more. You can even embed images and documents into your web pages with the exclusive Embedding option. Another unique attribute of HotDog is its Publishing option, which automates many of the chores involved in creating and serving a web page.

The most common tasks are listed in a toolbar with icons big enough for a user to actually understand what they're supposed to represent. While I think some of these items could be arranged in a more intuitive manner, they are extremely useful and efficient for quickly designing and modifying web pages — very important for experienced webmasters. In fact, everything is made simple in HotDog, from launching an app for previewing a page to making the most of both Netscape-specific tags and proposed HTML 3.0 tags. One of the best aspects of HotDog is its extensive online help documentation, which not only covers all features of HotDog, but also offers a comprehensive reference to the HTML language, Netscape-specific tags, and the proposed HTML 3.0 language.

HotDog is definitely the best HTML editor available at this time, but it does have some drawbacks. HotDog costs **$29.95** compared to the donation-ware status of HTML Writer. Also, HotDog has the common and very irritating 32 Kb limit on HTML files (a **$79** professional version will be released soon with unlimited file sizes and a spell checker). Perhaps what vexes me most is the fact that in order to receive major updates to the product, you must either purchase a yearly support contract ranging from **$25** - **$50** or pay a small fee for each major update (interim releases are free). These minor complaints aside, I think we have a winner...

TURNPIKE

Desc: New net suite of apps from across the sea
Pros: Extremely solid and feature- rich offline mail and news client
Cons: Price vs. value relative to other suites, no web browser yet, not the most attractive interface
Location: ftp://ftp.demon.co.uk/pub/mirrors/turnpike/
Filename: EVALS???.ZIP
Status: Evaluation package - 21 day free evaluation period
Company: Turnpike, Ltd.

This is a very interesting new net suite package from our friends across the sea (England, that is). Apps include offline mail and news clients, ftp, telnet, ping, and finger clients, a winsock stack and dialer, and soon a web browser (registered users will receive this free of charge). The ftp client can currently only be used with the built-in winsock dialer from Turnpike; I didn't get the opportunity to test either of these out.

The offline mail client is Turnpike's strongest client. The mail client implements some unique and quite useful features. The best of these is the tagging option. You can associate and group messages together by adding an informational tag to the message. Each message can have several tags and is therefore more like a web of interconnected messages as opposed to the typical folder scheme where each message is placed in only one folder. Additional features include support for more than one account, setting rules for filing incoming messages (including the ability to create your own custom rules), and the option of having every incoming/outgoing address automatically added to the address book.

The offline news client also offers many useful features, including full threading and the even cooler filtering option for news. You can mark threads as interesting or not very interesting; Turnpike in turn flags these threads and automatically filters future messages in the thread either to the top of the list or the bottom of the list based on the relevant flags. While I tend to prefer Agent and News Xpress for their additional features, the Turnpike news client is also quite strong.

The Telnet, Ping, and Finger clients are typical for a net suite — they don't really stand out, but they can definitely be useful. While the interface for Turnpike is not nearly as attractive as those of Emissary, Quarterdeck Internet Toolbox, and GNNWorks, Turnpike is quite easy to use and offers extensive online help documentation for getting started and for making the most of Turnpike. Overall, this is a very solid package of net apps; however, at 99 Pounds (about **$159**), I think all of the above three suites currently offer more features and value relative to price, but this could very likely change with the imminent addition of a web browser for Turnpike.

E-MAIL NOTIFY FOR WINDOWS 95

Desc: A background mail checker that works great with Windows 95
Pros: Background Window 95 mail checker that uses a minimum of system resources
Cons: Doesn't read mail — it will be easier for many users to just use their normal mail client
Location: ftp://olympe .polytechnique.fr/pub/notify/
Filename: E???W95.ZIP
Status: Postcard-ware — registering requires sending the author a postcard
Author: Ludovic Dubost

e-Mail Notify is the first background mail client for Windows 95 (that I know of). Versions are also available for Windows 32s and NT. Like other background mail clients, e-Mail Notify checks your host for mail at scheduled intervals. e-Mail Notify is unique from other background clients in that it also downloads and displays the headers for all messages you receive. It is also unique in that it works from within the windows tray bar on the task bar in Windows 95. Like all 32-bit winsock clients in Windows 95, you will need a 32-bit TCP/IP stack (Trumpet is only 16-bit and therefore will not work) in order for e-Mail Notify to work in Windows 95.

Like Post Office, e-Mail Notify only checks for mail (it's not a reader); however, it can also easily launch the mail client of your choice when mail arrives. The advantage to using e-Mail Notify over a regular mail client for checking mail is that it takes up a minimum 2-3% of system resources, as opposed to a normal mailreader, which can suck up anywhere from 7-10% of your system's resources. For Windows 95 users that always keep one eye on their resources, this is a great client to have. With its postcard-ware status, this is one background mail checker that's going to be hard to beat.◆

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ONE BBSCON

A HURRICANE OF CHANGES

by David Hakala and Jim Thompson

The Online Networking Exposition and BBS Convention made a bigger splash in Tampa, Florida, than Hurricane Felix did. Approximately 3,500 people descended upon the Tampa Convention Center. Many veteran and informed first-time attendees arrived on Tuesday, August 15, two days before the official opening of the show. The early-birds kicked off the traditional informal dealmaking, reunions and tribal communing that have made ONE BBSCON the Woodstock Festival of the online community. The event officially ended Sunday, but many participants still weren't back at their boards the following Tuesday.

The welcoming reception was held in a cavernous hall of the convention center on Thursday morning. ONE, Inc., President Jack Rickard introduced the Executive Advisory Board and each member commented on the state of the online industry. Jim Harrer of Mustang Software led the crowd through his traditional round of calisthenic poll-taking, asking attendees to stand in response to questions about their length of experience running online services, their ages and other parameters. Even Harrer was amazed to discover that a majority of the sysops present had their systems connected to the Internet to one degree or another. Connecting to the Net has become the *sine qua non* among professional system operators.

Dave McClure of AOP

Bob Metcalfe, Keynote Speaker

Dave McClure, Executive Director of the Association of Online Professionals, delivered a rousing call for unification and action, to counter the waves of misinformation and ill-conceived legislation spawned by the general public's sudden interest in the online world. McClure likened the recent defeat of the Exon Amendment and the current lull in federal legislative efforts to regulate the Internet to "the eye of the hurricane," and urged everyone present to use the breathing space afforded by Congress' summer vacation to organize the political power of online consumers and system operators, educate legislators and law enforcement agencies, and develop rational alternatives to government-imposed censorship.

Phil Becker, President of eSoft Inc. and Secretary/Treasurer of ONE Inc., bedazzled the crowd with a 30-minute, laser-assisted tour de force of the history of life online. It gets tougher every year to synopsize this subject in less than a feature-length film, but Becker once again impressed the crowd with how far we have come from the days of $2,000 10 Mb hard drives and 1200 baud modems.

The keynote address by Dr. Robert "Bob" Metcalfe followed Becker's extravaganza. Metcalfe evoked a powerful vision of a unified Information Superhighway, in which grass roots community networks and BBSs, academic and government Internet hosts, television and telephone companies, and the major online service providers will become integrated parts of a synergistic whole. The many segments of the online community have much to learn about and from each other. Many compromises remain to be made, particularly between content originators, data transporters and those who would market the content developed by others. But a new and necessary spirit of cooperation between former competitors and "natural enemies" is emerging in order to move the online universe to its next evolutionary stage.

That spirit of cooperation was evident when the exhibit hall began to fill with over 140 vendors; the lions laid down with the lambs. America Online was situated next to Banana Programming. Microsoft Network and Prodigy flanked Cybergate, Inc., a Florida ISP. Nortel, Inc. (formerly Northern Telecom) — a $9 billion Canadian telecomm giant — was wooing sysops and ISPs with

free Motorola ISDN adapters, promoting its Infor-mation Express program that pays local service providers a fee for each ISDN adapter sold to their end-users. (For details on the program, contact **http://www.nortel.com** or **mailto: info.express@nt.com**.) All in all, the exhibit floor was an astounding display of the diversity that characterizes the online industry — and its vendors' efforts to ally with each other.

Welcome session inspires attendees

THE CLIENT/SERVER CONFUSION

Of course, all was not harmonious utopia among the vendors. Mustang Software, eSoft/Durand and Galacticomm squared off with their versions of the client/server, multimedia, cross-platform everything-you-ever-wanted BBS. Sysops, ISPs and end-users were dazzled, delighted and utterly at a loss to decide whose implementation is "the best." If that question has an answer, it will take several months to find it. But the uncertainty didn't stop the buyers.

Durand sold over 30 of its Mindwire client/server packages, and eSoft did a brisk business in IPADs. The two recently merged firms announced that Durand's graphics display standard — Windows Interface Protocol (WIP) — will be integrated into eSoft's TBBS.

Galacticomm's Worldgroup and its myriad add-on software developers were also in tall clover. Worldgroup is presently the best supported client/server BBS in terms of third-party applications. American Banking Systems' MegaMarket package was particularly impressive. It provides a comprehensive "shopping mall" environment, allowing a sysop to rent space to merchants, let customers wander from store to store adding items to their shopping baskets, collect money in the form of electronic checks or credit card payments, even fax invoices to creditworthy customers. The multimedia catalog features support sound, images and Web-like hypertext documents. Security services allow some stores to be "locked" against minors or other excluded groups. MegaMarket supports sales tax tables and multiple shipping methods. Multimedia catalogs can be downloaded to the client and viewed offline. If you want to be the Macey's of the online world, this package is a likely candidate for your storefront.

Mustang Software did not have a working demo of its client/server, codenamed "Annihilator," at its booth. It sounds wonderful on paper, but beta testing will not begin until the end of September. MSI sysops can look forward to running up to 16 lines on a single Windows 95 machine, and up to 32 lines on a Windows NT machine. LAN connectivity will be supported under Windows NT. Annihilator is designed to support up to 1,500 simultaneous users in any combination of dialup, LAN or Internet connections. In its simplest form, an Annihilator server machine hosts the user, message and file databases plus a single program that controls access to the databases; access control is handled at this level. Client programs may reside on the same machine or be distributed across a LAN.

The client/server paradigm has a lot of merit from an online service provider's perspective. First, it saves the provider a heap of computer power (which of course costs money), by distributing thousands of repetitive tasks to the end-users' computers and their remote-access client programs. Second, it saves connect time and port capacity (which also cost money) by simply downloading data to a user's client and cutting the connection; the user can then muddle through a database, read a newspaper or drool over a GIF without tying up a host's port. Client/server architecture allows quantum leaps in the number of users a system can serve with a given amount of resources.

But there are no free lunches; the resources that service providers save must be supplied by the end-users. Mindwire occupies about 2.7 Mb and I've only visited Durand's home system. My Worldgroup directory swelled to over 12 Mb of icons, data files and assorted applications, after just one afternoon of cruising Worldgroup

Peter Tattam, Author of Trumpet Winsock

Networking in Person

systems. Downloading all of these client modules over a 28.8 Kbps dialup connection is excruciatingly tedious.

The client/server BBSs have arrived — with their shirttails hanging out. End-users can expect several months of aggravation and upheaval before the vendors make their products presentable. We really won't know if client/server is a Good Thing for end-users until the first-generation bugs are worked out. But it is such a Good Thing for online service providers that we can bet it's here to stay.

THE "WEB BBS" ENTRIES

The two dominant paradigms in the online world are rapidly merging into a seductive hybrid. The World Wide Web provides pretty pages, hypertext links and (almost) seamless switching from one transport protocol to another. Using a browser, one can hop the hyperlinks, telnet, ftp, gopher and mail — although dialup connections remain outside the HTML specification. But HTML is fundamentally a menu system, limited to document presentation and organization. CGI scripts and other add-ons provide the "back room processing." BBSs provide dialup access plus builtin message conferences, live chat, sophisticated file library management and other wheels that the CGI programmers are reinventing. Inevitably, a new application paradigm is emerging that combines the most desired characterstics of HTML and BBS software.

MMB Development, maker of the TEAMate UNIX BBS software package, is working on a Web BBS. Frankly, its demo system looks and acts much like the client/server packages described above. You can download MMB's client program from **http://www.mmb.com** and give the demo Web BBS a test drive. It should be ready for market by the end of September.

Frank LaRosa, author of the innovative Searchlight BBS software, is hard at work on his Odessa Project. Unlike the client/server efforts described above, Odessa requires no proprietary client program. Any Web browser will do for accessing LaRosa's Web BBS. Odessa's message conference and file modules use the same file formats as Search-light BBS software, making Odessa the first Web product capable of sharing data with an established BBS package. Now that's the way to do it! Less work for the sysop, who need only maintain one set of files. Better communication between Web and BBS users, since messages and files posted from either source are immediately available to BBS callers and Web browsers. Contact: Searchlight Software, **(216)631-9290** voice or **mailto:frank@searchlight.com** for updates on the Odessa Project, due out in September.

Attendees check e-mail

OTHER NOTABLE EXHIBITORS

One of the most intriguing approaches to providing a graphical interface for an online system comes from Interface Builders in Ketchum, Idaho. Billed as "Desktop Publishing for your online service," Online Workshop allows you to create a fully graphical client program that will work with any text-based BBS. The concept is simple — you build a graphical client program using a drag and drop authoring program which is distributed to your users along with a runtime engine.

Michael Erwin teaches HTML

To the caller, your BBS has suddenly been transformed from a commonplace text-based board to a stunning graphical system. In reality, your BBS has not changed — only the user interface has been altered. Since the interface to the BBS resides on the caller's machine, there are few restrictions on what can be created. The results can be spectacular. The authoring program does require a Macintosh running System 7. A runtime engine is currently available for the Macintosh. A Windows runtime

ONE BBSCON 1995

Bob Denny (Website), Gina Blaber (O'Reilly & Associates) Atul Arora (Webview)

engine will be in beta testing in September with a release date tentatively set for sometime before the end of the year. Jim Thompson will take a full look at Online Workshop in a future issue of Boardwatch. The retail cost is **$995** but Interface builders is offering an introductory special at **$695**. Contact: Interface Builders, **(208)726-5232** voice; **(208)726-9360** BBS; **mailto:intbuild@well.com**

Concentric Research Corp., best known for its BBS Direct private nationwide network services for BBS sysops, announced that it is entering the Internet Services business at the consumer, BBS connectivity and corporate levels. CRC is the only survivor of several startup companies that tried to offer BBS callers an alternative to long-distance bills. CRC made it because they did it right.

CRC patiently built its own network, employing faster frame-relay technology and the fastest modems available at each stage of its expansion. The hard road has paid off; CRC not only outlived its competitors, it recently received $10 million in financing from top venture capital firms Kleiner, Perkins and Goldman Sachs. The company is expanding its network to 235 POPs in the U. S. by the end of October, and will add seven POPs in Canada at the same time. Simultaneously, the entire network will be upgraded to 28.8 Kbps modems. ATM (Asynchronous Transfer Mode) and ISDN technologies will be added by year-end, maintaining CRC's edge in speed and responsiveness.

CRC now offers SLIP/PPP accounts to end-users under three pricing plans, none of which involves any startup fees. The Entry plan costs **$7.95** per month including the first five hours; additional hours are priced at **$1.95** and billed to the closest second of use. The Intermediate plan cost **$19.95** per month including 20 hours, and additional time costs just **$1.50** per hour. Heavy surfers can get unlimited connect time for **$29.95** per month. Rural customers can get tollfree access to SLIP/PPP starting at **$10** per month for two hours and **$5** per hour thereafter.

Sysops should take note of CRC's dedicated access charges: **$595** per month for a 56 Kbps line or **$1,395** per month for a T1. Installation, equipment and local telco charges are extra. UUCP newsfeeds cost **$100** per month. Sysops will also be pleased with the company's customer service staff, which works 24 hours, 7 days a week — just like their customers!

Everyone wants to be seen with a winner, and CRC attracted quite a few suitors at the show. Galacticomm is offering its Worldgroup software with the Internet Connectivity Option for a discounted price of **$1295** to customers who purchase connectivity from CRC. Additionally, CRC will waive its intallation fees for Worldgroup buyers through November 30. Mustang Software and Clark Development reportedly are also working on deals with CRC.

S&H Computer Systems, Inc., debuted TSX On-Line(tm), its all-in-one BBS/Internet multiline program running under the company's proprietary multitasking operating system. On one PC, TSX On-Line provides a multiline BBS, full Internet access via telnet, ftp or http and a World Wide Web server. Additional servers can be linked via a LAN as demand increases. Standard features include IRC and USENET newsgroups, plus an address book for each user to store e-mail, telnet, ftp and WWW addresses. Prices start at **$2395** for a two-user system, and level out at **$4,195** for a 64-user system. Each additional license for 32 users costs **$1000**. Contact Richard Dohrmann, VP Sales and Marketing: **mailto:richard.dohrmann@sandh.com** or **(615)327-3670** voice.

ONE BBSCON San Francisco

1996: SAN FRANCISCO, HERE WE COME!

The 1996 ONE BBSCON will be held next August in San Francisco's Moscone Center. About 110 of this year's exhibitors have already paid deposits for their booth next year. The West Coast venue and the continuing explosive growth of the online industry promise to make ONE BBSCON '96 the biggest and best ever. You *will* be there, won't you? ◆

Bob Metcalfe (right) and admirer

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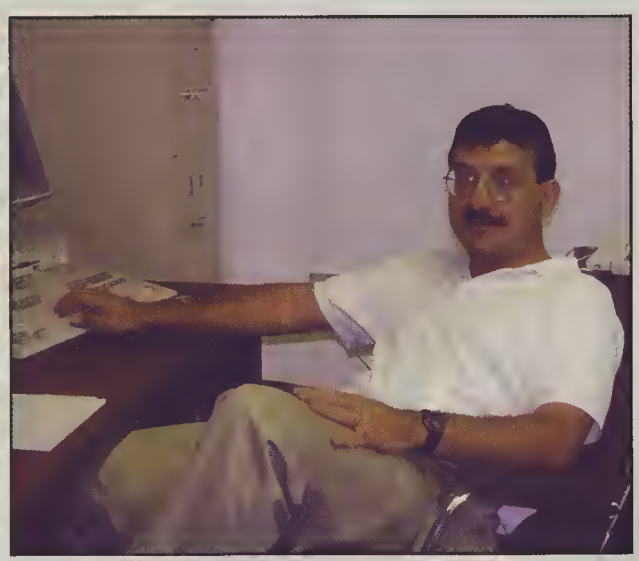
PEOPLE ONLINE

by Phyllis Phlegar

A PSYCHOLOGIST'S LOOK AT CYBERSPACE

One Sunday this past summer, I was up to one of my favorite pastimes — scanning the radio dial. Suddenly I heard the familiar voice of a former co-worker, Dr. Joseph Michelli, a clinical psychologist. Joe and I had worked together several years ago on a morning talk show that ran on a small national network. Joe's show "Wishing You Well" is now heard on the national network SMI Business Radio, live on Sundays from 1 to 3PM Eastern, and on tape at various times on a few affiliates.

This particular Sunday Joe was talking about alienation, and how it seemed to him that cyberspace was part of the problem. He mentioned his concern for several of his patients who had told him that they were "having sex" online. This surprised Joe, even though he's no stranger to the computer. Joe's time online includes gathering information, swapping e-mail and being the live guest in chats in health forums on several national services.



Dr.Joseph Michelli

The issue of alienation and online addiction is an interest of mine, so I contacted Joe. We got caught up on each other's news, what was going on in cyberspace, and his observations as a psychologist. He said that being online gives anyone of any age more of an opportunity to be "personality disordered."

About two and a half years ago Joe had his first patient with trouble online. Joe's first reaction was, "You gotta be kidding; how can you create a sexual experience with a keyboard?" Joe was aware of sight and auditory arousal and he understood phone sex and pornography. But words? For Joe it was startling. He knew there was also some level of written erotica, leading to addiction to books, but it was never interactive. Something about this interactive environment of the computer, with a beating heart on the other side, leads to an addiction more intense than one formed with a book or magazine.

Joe commented that online, a person can do things that are "covertly inappropriate." One of his patients was a police officer who, after being the "good citizen" all day, would go online as a woman. The police officer would develop relationships as a female, get deep into them, then drift away. He had the desire to interact as woman. Being online gave him a secret and safe opportunity to experience life as a woman, so much so that he tried getting a make-over in real life as a woman. But that didn't work and so he continued to do it online.

The police officer eventually became dysfunctional at work because he was online all the time; he suffered a nervous breakdown and was hospitalized. He then became one of Joe's patients and spoke with Joe about computer addiction and crossover sexuality issues, wondering and wanting to verify whether he was a transvestite.

After therapy, the patient left the police force, got divorced, filed bankruptcy and embraced a life that's more in keeping with who he is, so he doesn't need the online female alter ego. Now he's a schoolteacher. He uses the computer as a reward for himself, setting goals and allowing himself a small amount of time online when each goal is completed. He avoids chat rooms that are relationship-based and uses the computer to gather information and share common interests in public forums

It's Joe's feeling that being online and sharing thoughts can create a level of intimacy in a grey zone that doesn't technically violate a marriage contract but is on the fringe — an ambiguous romantic zone without crossing the line. This kind of intimacy can escalate from low levels into a sexual addiction online. Joe adds, "The beauty of the computer is that you can have titillating experiences each time you log on. That's where the addiction is and it's got such power. You may be tired and lonely when you sign on. The computer has the potential to create a different mood and alter that tired and lonely mood like a drug. Instead of a mood altering

Phyllis Phlegar is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and also holds a private pilot's license. She is a freelance announcer and her work can be heard on Business Radio Network, National Public Radio and the Armed Forces Radio Network. Phyllis' book *Love Online* is now available from Addison Wesley Publishing Company.

Write to Phyllis, at `XHBG67A` on Prodigy, `P.Phlegar` on GEnie, `Phlegar` on Delphi, `P Phlegar` on AOL, `71562,407` on CompuServe or at `phyllis@cris.com` on the Internet.

object (like a drug) the computer is a mood altering experience."

One of Joe's married patients wants women to fall in love with him. His problems didn't start on the computer; he'd already been to a sexaholics program, and then came to Joe for love addiction problems.

This patient's therapy was going well, but he relapsed into his old habits by going online while he was at work. He started exchanging e-mail with women and eventually engaging in live chats. He soon tired of the women he was romancing and went on to new ones, leaving the first group abruptly behind. His treatment now involves avoiding online chat with women or using e-mail as an avenue for his addiction. He still has the need to be loved and fawned over by many women and is a work in progress.

The computer is perfect for married people who want to "cheat." They can hide the fact that they are married, and turn off the computer if the spouse comes into the room. If you're having a bad marriage, it doesn't take long to discover the possibilities in a chat room. There are online forums for discussing sexuality. Some people don't think they have such a forum in their marriage, possibly because they are in a burned out relationship where intimacy has died. Joe sees real danger in these opportunities to get sucked into situations that "band-aid" the real problem: the inability to get to real levels of intimacy. So these people get a quick fix of superficial intimacy online. Pure sex addicts pretend love and affection to get to what they really want, the accompanying sexual intimacies.

Why do people get into these situations in the first place? Joe said, "These people don't feel special or valued, they are looking externally to be validated, so they go online to get a large shopping cart of people. The computer, an easy way to meet a large number of people, becomes a quick fix of specialness and external validation. Some of these onliners want to superficially experience intimacy...without doing a lot of work."

A female patient of Joe's, a writer, works out of her home and uses her computer for word processing. But instead of getting out of the house when her 10-12 hour workday was done, she used her computer for human interaction. Online she developed relationships and felt love and connection beyond her solitary workday. She came to Joe because she was depressed, even though she felt she was nurtured in those relationships online. To Joe, online relationships have some small dimension of intimacy, but what about her longterm future? Will it consist of perpetual online relationships?

With counselling she now stops work earlier. She doesn't go into online relationships but goes out of the house and involves herself in activities that she enjoys, like being part of a local birdwatching group in town. She's replaced the ease of online social networking — where she'd only talk about birdwatching — with a face to face group of people and real activity. Through this group and others, she has met a few people who she dates and one relationship that may go long term. This patient is doing great, dating local men that she genuinely likes; she isn't depressed anymore.

Joe knows that there are lots of positive things about going online. It's a good place to formulate relationships and to start shopping around for one. But some people get addicted to the shopping without "taking the relationship home," working on it and living with it the rest of their lives. Behind your computer screen, you can be shrouded in a persona of one's own creation. This could be a positive experience. Joe notes, "A person has the potential to role play, to present their sexuality in an open and honest expression; to say things they'd never say in person. But will they use this experience to transfer what was said and done into a appropriate face to face relationship?"

Problems on the computer are not all relationship oriented. There are the "9 to 5" workers who, by the end of a long day, are burned and stressed out. They fall into the computer and escape into Star Trek chat rooms and such. This is what Joe refers to as "escapism addiction," the need to escape and go numb. Some onliners do it in game rooms, others surf aimlessly through the WEB and favorite haunts via the Internet. These people spend hours online every night, forsaking family and friends.

Are you addicted to the computer and its various venues? Are your kids and your spouse in the other room doing something else without you? Are you using the computer in a way that isolates you from the family? Do you use your computer to numb yourself? Does it restrict your access to other humans? Do you cut off social interactions in favor of the computer?

On the other hand, are your travels "healthy?" Do you search for sympathetic minds? Are you expanding your intellectual horizons by using this cyber-tool to interact with diverse people in a way not available years ago? Joe suggests that you do your own honest appraisal of yourself and how you use the computer.

Computer addiction is real. It affects and isolates many people. Other folks use the computer as a tool to get more out of life, an extension of what they already have and value. Joe summed up by saying, "The computer, in the right hands, can carve out 'The David' or 'Venus' in a person, but in the wrong hands it can sculpt your emotional tomb."

Dr. Joe Michelli received his PhD at the University of Southern California, Los Angles, in Clinical Psychology in 1988. He owns a private psychotherapy practice, teaches at a local university and travels nationally with his primary focus on public speaking on wellness and health; he can be contacted at **(719)776-8325**. He is the host of "Wishing You Well," a talk show on SMI Business Radio network which deals with all psychological issues, health and wellness promotion. "Wishing You Well" can be heard live on Sundays from 1-3 PM Eastern time, and on tape at various times. Contact Joe via Business Radio at his shared e-mail address of **bizradio@prodigy.com**. You can also listen to a WAV file of Joe on the WEB at **http://www.databahn.net/advice/** ◆

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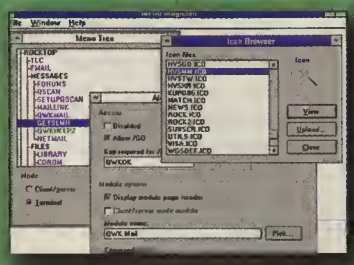

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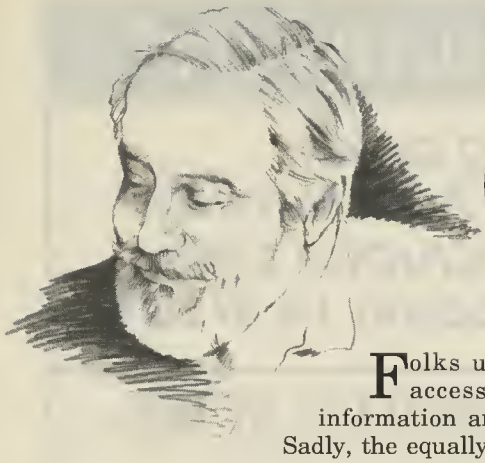

GOVERNMENT ACCESS

by Jim Warren

COURTS — FOR JUSTICE, OR FOR SALE?

Folks usually think of government access as pertaining to legislative information and executive branch agencies. Sadly, the equally important third branch — the judiciary — is little seen, except for abberations such as the OJ eternity and Mendez malfunctions.

But a huge battle is being waged among federal, state and local jurists and budget hustlers, around who will control access to public court records in their useful (computerized) forms, and how much users will pay for modern access.

When court records are a profit center, or their use is tediously manual, then access to justice is unnecessarily further limited to the wealthy, the tax-supported destitute, and those cases pursued by the very few public-interest attorneys. And the poverty and public-interest cases are sucked dry by access profiteers.

Courts are computerizing to make their operations more efficient and less costly, and the oldtime lawbook publishers want to monopolize computerized access just as they functionally monopolized paper access (see the Oct., 1994 column about West Publishing and Westlaw). The budget-limited courts — especially at the local and state levels — are greatly tempted to charge rape-level profiteering prices for the public's records that they computerize.

One of the more egregious examples: earlier this year, the Los Angeles County superior and municipal courts proposed a **$49,255** initial computer-access fee, plus a huge per-record kickback, uh, "commission" on each court record distributed electronically — and a prohibition on bulk distribution. *These are public records that were computerized at tax-payer expense!*

At the state level, the Florida Supreme Court has proposed adoption of Appellate Procedure 9.800(n) concerning access to computerized case citations. Numerous other local and state courts around the nation are struggling with the same issues.

At stake is nothing less than justice — and equitable access thereto.

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Warren [345 Swett Rd., Woodside CA 94062; **jwarren@well.com**] works on technology-related civil liberties and open-government advocacy, and currently serves on the California Secretary of State's Electronic Filings Advisory Panel that is composing recommendations for how best to make campaign finance disclosures and lobbyists' reports available online without cost to users and at very low cost to tax-payers.

Warren received the Dvorak Lifetime Achievement Award (1995), the Hugh M. Hefner First-Amendment Award (1994), the James Madison Freedom-of-Information (1994) for his efforts to open online access to government, and the Electronic Frontier Foundation's Pioneer Award in its first year (1992). He founded *InfoWorld* and the Computers, Freedom & Privacy conferences (1991); was founding host of PBS television's "Computer Chronicles" (1981) and founding Editor of Dr. Dobb's Journal of Computing (1976).

GUIDELINES FOR JUSTICE

If the following nonproprietary guidelines are adopted, they will offer numerous opportunities for innovative online services, for free and for fee. However if the old, entrenched public records monopolists — or the courts — are permitted to choke access to computerized court records, as they have strangled access to paper records, then all of us will be shut out of any such opportunities, and justice will continue to be elusive.

These are recommendations by the person who is perhaps the foremost warrior and most effective advocate of free and wee-fee public access, Executive Director James "Jamie" Love, who essentially IS the Taxpayer Assets Project, a Ralph Nader public-interest operation: P.O. Box 19367, Washington, DC 20036; **mailto:tap@tap.org**; voice **(202)387-8030**; fax **(202)234-5176**; **http://www.essential.org/tap/tap.html**

In a July 31st letter to the Florida Supreme Court, Love pointed out — now that more economical and useful access to court records is becoming possible — that the courts must resolve "who owns" the law. He offered some stellar guidelines (copy this to your local and state judges!):

> ***"The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit said that its cost of operating a computer bulletin board system to disseminate opinions costs less than $1,000 per year, and saved the court much more..."***

"Courts must ensure that the law is truly in the public domain, and copies of court opinions should be available to anyone who has access to the Internet or other computer networks. In order to broaden access to legal information, courts have to make sure that private publishers, like West, do not 'own' such items as corrections to text or accepted citations. The State of Florida can take a number of steps to broaden access to court opinions...

"1. The 'official' version of the opinions (the judicial decisions that define what the law is) should be available directly from the courts, including all corrections or other editorial changes. Any official 'reporter' of court decisions should place the text of the decisions into the public domain.

"2. Courts should use computer bulletin boards or Internet servers to disseminate copies of opinions

electronically. This is not a difficult or expensive task. In a January 3, 1995 order, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit said that its cost of operating a computer bulletin board system to disseminate opinions costs less than $1,000 per year, and saved the court much more than that in terms of reduced staff time for the dissemination of information. A copy of that order is attached to this letter.

"3. Courts should fix citations (reference codes) to the opinions when they are first issued, so that anyone can immediately disseminate the information with an accepted citation. Citations consist of two items: a unique identifier for the opinion, and a method of dividing the internal text into smaller sections (the so-called pinpoint citation).

"4. Proposals for a unique identifier for the case have typically focused on two alternatives. In Louisiana, the Court, docket number and date of the opinion are used. In Wisconsin and South Dakota the state bar associations have proposed a system of sequential numbers. The American Association of Law Libraries recently adopted a report which recommends the sequential numbering system.

"5. Proposals for public domain pinpoint citations have also focused on two alternatives. The State of Louisiana uses the page breaks from slip opinions (opinions issued on 'slips' of paper). The States of Wisconsin, Colorado and South Dakota are considering paragraph numbering. Paragraph numbering is already used by the federal Military Court of Appeals and the Province of British Columbia, and is the method recommended by the American Association of Law Libraries, the American Association of Legal Publishers and most private publishers, with the notable exception of West Publishing (which has copyrighted their page numbers that have been widely used as citation codes).

"TAP (Taxpayer Assets Project) strongly recommends paragraph numbering, as a method which is technology and vendor neutral. The key to a system based upon paragraph numbering is for the courts to assign the paragraph numbers at the time when the opinion is issued. It is also important to note that it isn't particularly important how the paragraph numbering is done, so long as everyone uses the same numbers. This is best accomplished when a single entity assigns the paragraph numbers, and the easiest way to do this is for the court itself to provide the numbers when the opinion is issued."

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TELECOM "REFORM" - I TOLD YA SO!

As of August 1, the House was just about to exude its perversion of the Telecommunications "Reform" Act. And sure 'nuf — just like this column warned last May — it's a cozy sellout of robust competition in favor of government-facilitated functional monopolies, but apparently with the RBOCs (regional Bell operating companies) to be crowned as kings of the Hill for competition suppression.

At press time, the long-line carriers (AT&T, MCI, Sprint, etc.), and to a lesser extent the cable giants and network broadcasters, are suddenly howling their corporate heads off — complete with full-page newspaper ads and prime-time teevee spots — warning about the horrors of anti-competitive telecom monopolies. Of course, they had been coy and quiet until now — because until the House hustlers had completed their nefarious deeds, these other communications giants expected to share in carving up the public carcass as part of a fed-facilitated telecom cartel, and were quite content when they thought they would share in government suppression of potential new competitors and innovators.

Before the Senate passed its version of what the House has now butchered, Senator Bob Kerrey (D-NE) tried to make it real reform legislation, offering explicit proposals to assure legitimate telecom competition. But senior Republicans weren't having any of it.

(As an aside, the Repubs — who so zealously posture about returning power to the states — were insisting that the Federal Communications Commission pre-empt states in "controlling" telecom rates and rules, once the "reforms" permit the giants to circumvent old-fashioned antitrust restraints.)

Gore has finally bleated a belated alarm, and the White House has warned that Clinton will veto the legislation as being monopolistic - even though they were virtually silent about telecom reform in the half-year that it's been fermenting (only one low-key announcement a month or two earlier, as far as I know). Perhaps there's still more campaign loot to be milked out of the competing giants.

By the time you read this, either the bill will be law and the deregulated Baby Bells will be gearing up to "serve" us, or the nation will be back to square one with the same excessive, baroque, Byzantine, bureaucracy-choked regulatory swamp of the past.

Either way, Congress has again refused to pass legitimate telecom reform that would force real free-market competition on the historic government-granted monopolies. It seems the Republican leadership can sell out the public interest just as well as the Democrat leadership did for decades.

THE HORSE'S MOUTH

Jim Warren will be speaking about a variety of issues concerning net-aided activism, computer-based open government and technology-related civil liberties — at the Siebold Conference in San Francisco on Sep. 27th, the Internet and New Technologies Conference in Ottawa on Oct. 2nd,the Midpeninsula ACLU annual dinner in Los Altos CA on Oct. 17th, the California Society of CPAs chapter in San Jose CA on Oct. 26th, the Forth Interest Group in Foster City CA on Oct. 28th and the Internet Ethics Seminar at the University of California-Berkeley on Nov. 19th. ◆

LEGALLY ONLINE

by Lance Rose, Esq.

ONLINE SYSTEMS R NOT NEWSPAPERS (EXCEPT SOMETIMES IN COURT)

A wide-eyed debate was sparked when Prodigy was held liable for up to **$200 million** based on supposedly libelous statements by one of its users. Are online services "published" like newspapers, or are they only "distributors" of the speech and publications of others? If they are publishers, then online services might be held to account for irresponsible acts of their users. But if they are mere distributors, analogous to newspaper or magazine distributors, then it does not make sense to ask them to monitor and edit the contents of all the messages and files they carry.

A fascinating and worthy debate, but also one that fuels a false understanding of the metaphors we use to discuss online services. Many journalists and commentators use these metaphors — "newspaper," "shopping center," "post office," "singles bar" and so on — not just as metaphors, but as literal descriptions of online services.

Will online services be nothing more than glorified electronic newspapers? Of course not. Online systems are a new, enormously more plastic and extensible medium than print could ever hope to be. Evolving into a "newspaper" would be a distinctly retro move.

Nonetheless, the newspaper metaphor is useful when employed for the right reasons. First, it provides a transitional means to understand online services as a brand new kind of social structure. When our society has enough experience with online services to understand them in their own right, rather than by analogy to something familiar but distinctively different, we will stop seeing them as mere electronic newspapers. Second, online services will always include newspaper-like functions among their various offerings to users. When online services really act like newspapers, it is fair and accurate to treat them as such. However, this does not justify extending the analogy to treat the entire online service as a "newspaper," when many of its functions are not newspaper-like in the least (which was one of the big mistakes made by the Prodigy court).

The newspaper and publisher metaphors for online services are less accurate than we think they are. They only serve as tools for understanding, and rarely, if ever, completely describe an online service. Ironically, even in this reduced capacity the metaphors can have far more powerful implications than we ever dreamed.

This is demonstrated in three recently decided court cases where "newspaper" and "publisher" metaphors for online services played central roles in the courts' decisions. Each case illustrates, in a very different manner, how metaphors function as tools for understanding and misunderstanding the nature of online services. Taken together, along with the recent Prodigy case, these cases provide a bracing, panoramic view of how deeply online services are already woven into the fabric of society, and how we can use metaphors to explore the details of the weave.

A TAX ON ELECTRONS

Reuters is a well-known international newswire service. It provides financial and other news electronically, both at the wholesale level to other publishers like the *Wall Street Journal*, and at retail to corporate and individual customers. When Texan tax authorities audited Reuters, they assessed it for **$320,000** in unpaid "information service" taxes for a three year period from 1986 to 1989. The information services involved were primarily in the area of energy services, domestic money services, and international money rate services.

> ***"For Texas tax law at least, it would seem the medium is not only the message, but the basis for taxation."***

Reuters paid the assessment, but then sued the state of Texas to get its money back in *Reuters v. Sharp*. Its claim was based on a disturbing disparity in Texas sales tax law. If a print newspaper published exactly the same information which Reuters delivered in electronic form, it would not have to pay a dime to Texas, because the state granted print newspapers a blanket exemption from sales taxes. Reuters claimed the First Amendment required Texas to give Reuters the same tax preference it traditionally accorded print publishers. The form in which information is delivered by the press should be irrelevant, since the sole purpose of the tax relief is to ease financial burdens on organizations that, as members of the "press," perform the function of delivering the news to the rest of society. (Note that Reuters did not contest Texas' general right to impose a sales tax on media. It is well established that the states may apply sales taxes even-handedly to all businesses, including publishers.)

Nice argument, but the court rejected it. In the face of Reuters' powerful assertion that news is news regardless of whether it is delivered in print or electronically, the court declared that online delivery is a different "medium" than print publishing. Therefore,

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Reuters could not ask for the same privileges granted publishers who used the more traditional print medium; it would be like comparing apples to oranges. For Texas tax law at least, it would seem the medium is not only the message, but the basis for taxation.

Going further, the court said that Reuters did not qualify for the newspaper exemption from taxes because its information services did not meet the Texas legislature's "format" requirements for newspapers: Reuters' information is delivered to computer monitors and computer printouts, instead of as dried pulp and newsprint. These bits of reasoning by the court are rather curious when we try to reconcile them with the wording of the U.S. Constitution. The First Amendment speaks of freedom of "the press," not "freedom of the press in certain media," or "freedom of the press when it delivers the news in certain physical formats."

Reuters pointed out that courts in New York and Oklahoma disagreed with the Texas court's approach. Those courts had found it unconstitutional to tax news businesses differently simply because they delivered the news through different media (the specific media involved were print and broadcasting). The Reuters court acknowledged these cases, but said they were overruled by a more recent U.S. Supreme Court case, *Leathers v. Medlock*, which the Reuters court was following instead.

Using an analysis it said it took from Leathers, the Reuters court said, "a sales tax that targets selected segments of the media becomes constitutionally suspect when it threatens to suppress the expression of particular ideas or viewpoints. A tax requires strict-scrutiny review when the tax:

(1) is limited to the press alone;

(2) targets a small group of speakers; or

(3) discriminates on the basis of the content of the taxpayer's speech."

These three categories of suspect taxation are all clearly reasonable ways to protect free speech by prohibiting various kinds of suppression. Unfortunately for Reuters, the Texas sales tax law did not have First Amendment problems under any of the three categories.

Category (1) did not apply, since the sales tax applied to all information services, press and non-press alike. Category (2) did not apply, because the sales tax targeted a large and growing group, consisting of all online information services of every kind. Category (3) did not apply, because the newspaper exemption was not based on content at all; as the court had already declared, Reuters' eligibility for the newspaper exemption was denied strictly due to the electronic format and medium in which Reuters delivered its news, with no regard at all to the particular news, viewpoints or opinions contained in Reuters' news feed.

Thus, Reuters was out of luck in attempting to qualify for the newspaper exemption from sales tax, under no less an authority than a recent ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court. Or was it? In fact, the Leathers case recognized a broader scope of First Amendment protection of the media from discriminatory taxation than was admitted by the Reuters court. Specifically, while the Reuters court's category (3) looks only at whether the tax in question is based on particular speech or other content, the Supreme Court also said that a tax that affects only speech or content, regardless of the intent of the tax, is suspect under the First Amendment. If the Reuters court had recognized this, Reuters would have had one more chance to show that, in practical effect, denying it the sales tax exemption unfairly suppressed the kinds of news Reuters uniquely carried on its services. Whether Reuters could have offered proof capitalizing on this opportunity we will likely never know.

This mistake by the Reuters court may provide a basis for further challenges of Texas' information service sales tax, especially by bulletin board, conferencing, chat and other interactive online systems. If eligibility for the "newspaper" exemption from the Texas sales tax is evaluated under the Supreme Court's full criteria in Leathers, rather than the mistakenly narrowed set of criteria in Reuters, online services could make a compelling showing that they qualify for the exemption.

"Burdening multi-user online discussions with a discriminatory sales tax would suppress an entire class of public forums, full of thousands or millions of individuals."

Burdening multi-user online discussions with a discriminatory sales tax would suppress an entire class of public forums, full of thousands or millions of individuals. There can be no assurance their opinions are represented already in newspapers, since these are mostly people with neither the resources, inclination, nor opportunity to publish or write for print newspapers. Their views can only effectively be seen and heard in places like electronic bulletin boards. Their discussions are "news" at least as much as the latest irrelevant bleatings about O.J. in the daily tabloids. Hopefully, judges will soon become familiar enough with online systems to know that for themselves.

So why did the Reuters court draw distinctions in "media" and "formats" that were virtually meaningless, and fudge its application of the Leathers criteria for evaluating tax exemptions to favor some news media over others? It may, as it claimed, have simply deferred to the legislature and the way it writes its laws. It may also be that Reuters, big as it is, bucked the status quo, and just had to lose at this juncture. For now, traditional print newspapers have political clout and get tax preferences in Texas, and electronic services are not allowed to join the club. As online services become a more important part of local Texas industry and gain more influence with voters, we should not be surprised if the laws are changed to give tax exemptions to online newspapers as readily as to the offline version.

REACH OUT AND PUBLISH AT SOMEONE

Jeff Meneau and Rosario Fuschetto were users of the SportsNet BBS, a system devoted to the needs of sports memorabilia dealers. They made plans in e-mail for Meneau, who lived in Wisconsin, to visit Fuschetto in New York City. Shortly before the appointed time, Fuschetto became seriously ill, and asked Menaeu to postpone the trip. In ensuing private discussions, they began arguing about who would bear the cost of various tickets already purchased for airline travel, a Knicks basketball game, and the David Letterman show. Fuschetto then went public, telling other SportsNet users in the public bulletin board area his version of his fight with Meneau. Meneau was enraged by this move and started the lawsuit *It's In The Cards, Inc. v. Fuschetto* in the Wisconsin courts, based on claims of libel, negligence, and interfering with his business.

The trial court granted Fuschetto's motion to dismiss the case, because Meneau started the suit without giving a formal demand to Fuschetto to correct his statements on the SportsNet BBS.

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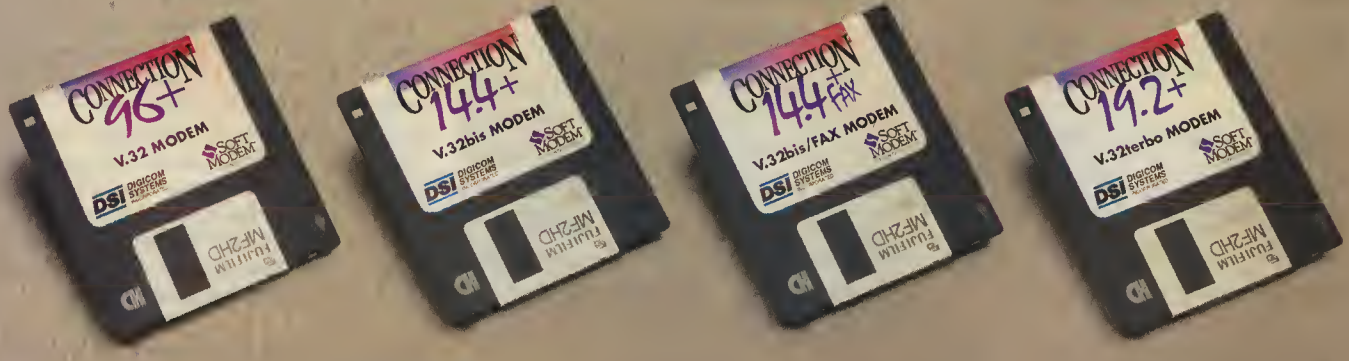

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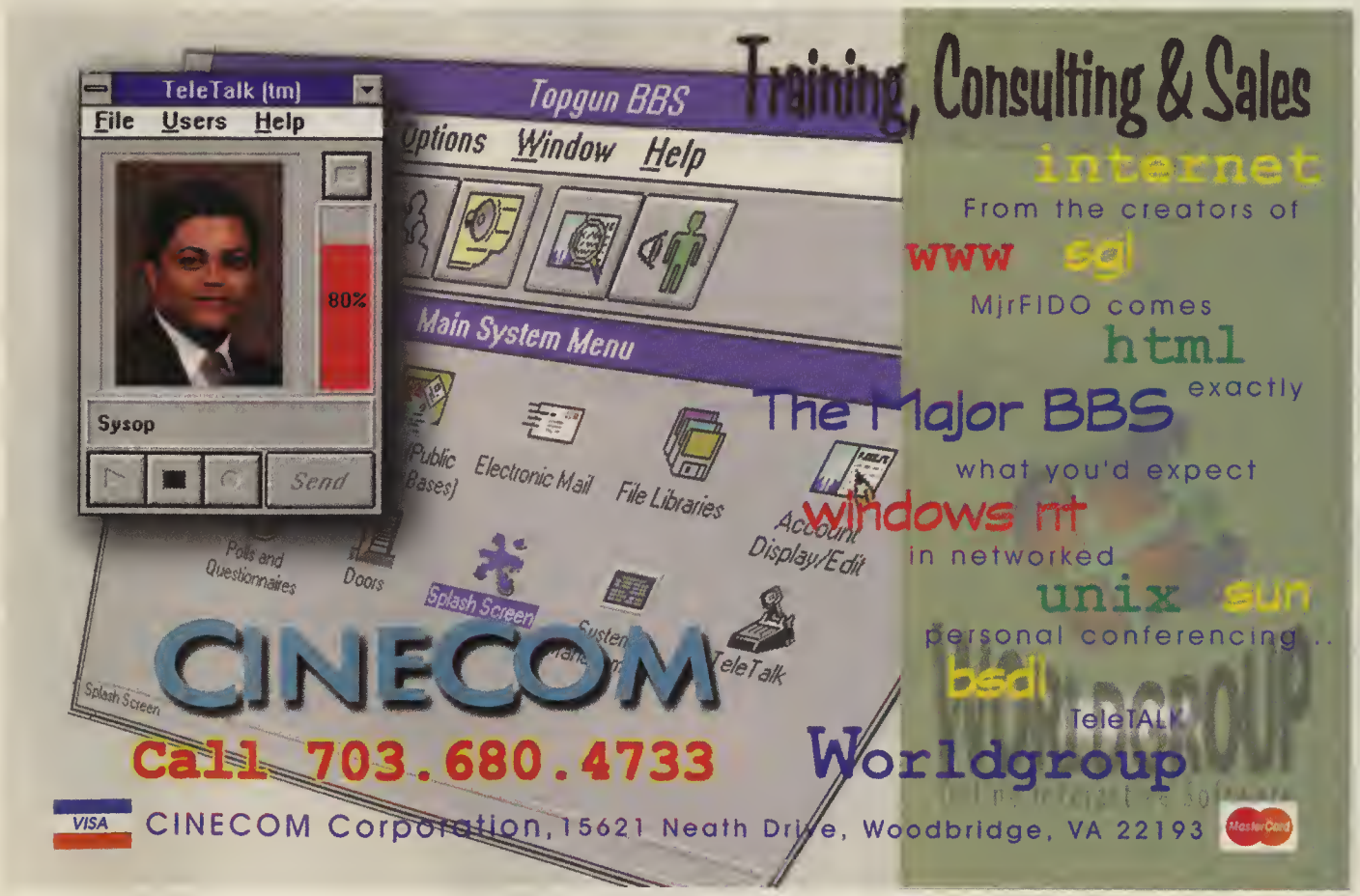
It held this violated a Wisconsin law making such demands a prerequisite to legal action (and if the demand is made, and the publication involved prints a correction, the money that can be awarded if the lawsuit proceeds anyway could be sharply reduced. Thus overall, the rule protects publications against big damage awards). Meneau appealed the decision. This time the appeals court agreed with Menaeu. It sent the case back down to the trial court for further proceedings on Meneau's claims against Fuschetto.

In reversing the lower court decision, the appeals court considered the exact language of the Wisconsin libel correction statute: "Before any civil action shall be commenced on account of any libelous publication in any newspaper, magazine or periodical, the libeled person shall first give those alleged to be responsible or liable for the publication a reasonable opportunity to correct the libelous matter." Focusing on the phrase "newspaper, magazine or periodical," it asserted without explanation that the public discussion areas of SportsNet were obviously neither a "newspaper" nor a "magazine." It then considered whether a BBS is a "periodical," and found SportsNet's public areas not to be that, either: "SportsNet users place their messages on the bulletin board at any time and there are no set time limits as to when the messages are read. The messages are not done on a monthly, weekly or daily basis, but are sporadic as to whenever a SportsNet user desires to write a communication. Thus, we conclude that these messages on the bulletin board are not periodicals under the ordinary meaning of the term."

So the case will proceed. But is it fair to protect magazines, newspapers and the like (and their writers) from the fear of libel lawsuits through Wisconsin's libel correction rules, and not extend that protection to online services and their users? Isn't this the same kind of seemingly arbitrary discrimination between media that we just saw in *Reuters v. Sharp*, where newspapers get a special privilege from the government, while online services are hung out to dry? Indeed, when we look at the Wisconsin appeals court's reasoning, it's identical to the empty "format" distinction drawn in Reuters: bulletin board discussions simply have the wrong timing and rhythm to be considered "periodicals," since they are continuously updated, instead of coming out in discrete units every day, week or month.

The result of this approach is that bulletin boards once again become a legally disfavored medium compared to newspapers and magazines. Those who claim they were libeled in a magazine will see their legal options sharply cut down if the magazine prints a correction upon demand, but those who claim libel on a BBS can march right into court and sue for damages as large as they feel they can prove.

At the same time, there's a positive note in the appeals court decision. It permits Meneau to proceed with a libel case that may very well belong in court. The court's account of the case does not tell us what the supposedly libelous statements were. But it does imply that SportsNet may be pivotally important to Meneau's business, as a national forum for sports collectibles dealers. If a dealer's reputation is wrongly damaged in such a place, it might put a serious dent in his or her business for a long time. By permitting this libel suit to continue, the appeals court has recognized the importance of online activities in people's real, everyday business lives, including the effect such activities can have on their reputations and overall business prospects.



HOWARD STERN BUTTS BACK

Howard Stern is a nationally famous radio talk show host, TV personality and "author" of a best-selling book named "Private Parts." He also ran for governor of New York in 1994, although he dropped out of the race before Election Day. During his election run, the Delphi national online service ran an ad both for the service as a whole, and for a special discussion group it set up for Delphi users to discuss Stern's candidacy. The ad featured a picture of Stern's bare posterior, taken from the back cover of his book. Stern claimed this violated his right of publicity under New York law, as an unpaid use of his image to sell Delphi memberships, and started the lawsuit *Stern v. Delphi* in New York Supreme Court (the same court system in which the Prodigy case is proceeding).

Delphi admitted to using Stern's picture without permission, but claimed it was legally permitted to do so under an "incidental use" exception to New York's right of publicity laws. The court agreed and dismissed the case against Delphi. It held that companies in the news business have a broad right under the First Amendment to advertise their news services to the public, and may use pictures of famous personalities in such advertising, without having to worry about rights of publicity.

In case you're wondering, this ruling leaves most of Stern's publicity rights intact. He still controls the use of his image to sell products of all sorts ranging from hair conditioner to car washes, and only loses that control when a news publisher uses his image to promote or advertise that publisher's legitimate news services involving him.

In discussing Delphi's status as a news disseminator, the court took an interesting approach. It referred to Delphi sometimes as a "news vendor," and sometimes, in its bulletin board function, as the equivalent of a "letters to the editor" newspaper column. It made no difference in this case whether Delphi was equivalent to a newspaper or a news distributor. Delphi qualified for the incidental use exception to the right of publicity either way since it was, in the court's words, a "news disseminator."

Compare this with the publisher/distributor distinction in the Prodigy case. Labeling Prodigy's bulletin board service a "distributor" of member postings would have dismissed the case against it, but labeling it a "publisher" of those postings kept the case and its $200 million damage claims alive. In contrast, Delphi's bulletin board service qualified for the incidental use exception to Stern's publicity claims either as "publisher" or "distributor." Thus, the court casually labeled it one or the other according to its whim. The Prodigy court made the distinction between "publisher" and "distributor" critical to the libel case it was considering; to the Delphi court, that distinction was irrelevant to the right of publicity claims before it. And if you're looking for irony, consider this: these decisions were made by neighboring judges in the same New York trial court system, and at about the same time.

A GRAND UNIFICATION THEORY?

Rounding up the three cases discussed above, plus the Prodigy case discussed in this column in prior months, we arrive at an interesting set of comparisons and incongruities regarding whether online systems are or should be treated legally like newspapers.

First, a simple tally: Two cases held that online systems or communications are like newspapers (Prodigy and Delphi), and two held they are not like newspapers (Reuters and It's In The Cards). Of these pairs:

(1) It hurt Prodigy for its BBS operation to be considered like a newspaper for purposes of libel laws, while it helped Delphi for its BBS operation to be considered like a newspaper for purposes of publicity rights laws.

(2) It hurt Reuters not to be considered like a newspaper for purposes of state sales tax laws, and it hurt defendant Fuschetto in It's In The Cards not to be considered like a newspaper for purposes of libel laws.

But wait, there's more when we pair up the cases differently:

(1) In the Reuters case, Reuters begged the court to be treated like a newspaper, but it wasn't, exposing Reuters to massive legal damages. In the Prodigy case, Prodigy begged the court *not* to be treated as a newspaper, but it was treated as a newspaper anyway, exposing Prodigy to massive legal damages. If you look at these two cases alone, you might get the sense that online services lose either way.

(2) The Delphi court treated postings on a bulletin board by individual users as "news," thus giving Delphi a valuable press privilege against publicity rights cases. The It's In The Cards court refused to treat postings on a bulletin board by individual users as "publications," thus depriving those users of any press privileges in libel cases.

> ***"The trouble starts when we leap from using the newspaper metaphor as a tool to analyze online systems, to adopting the belief that online systems are newspapers."***

Looking at these two cases alone, you might get the sense that it's pot luck whether courts will recognize bulletin board postings as legitimate publishing. I've looked at these results several times, and have yet to come up with a consistent pattern reconciling all the incongruities. It's not even clear from these cases whether or not it's a good thing for an online system to be like a newspaper. Being considered a "newspaper" led or would have led to good results for the online services in three out of the four cases. However, when Prodigy was held to be a newspaper, this finding kept it exposed to a $200 million potential damage claim, by far the whopper of the amounts at stake in these cases.

Should we reconcile the cases by declaring one or two of the case results incorrect, and that way eliminate the contradictions by fiat? We might, but to do so would avoid learning the real lesson these cases teach us: that the metaphor used to describe a thing is not the thing itself. The trouble starts when we leap from using the newspaper metaphor as a tool to analyze online systems, to adopting the belief that online systems *are* newspapers.

If we refrain from making that leap, then we can use metaphors as appropriate to each situation. The selfsame online system function can be viewed firmly as a "publisher" for one purpose, as a "distributor" for a second, and as an "interactive entertainment medium" for a third, and no contradiction needs to be implied by these three different characterizations. It requires no more than remembering the old saw that meaning is contextual, and seeing that online services provide a great many different contexts, each one shaping the meanings of the metaphors we use to try and make sense of them. ◆

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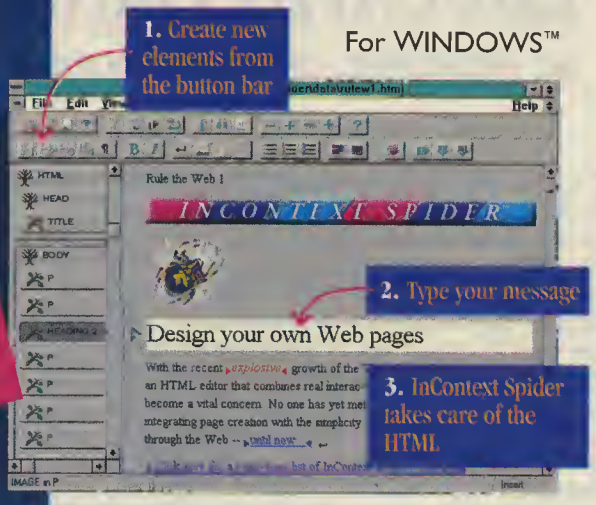

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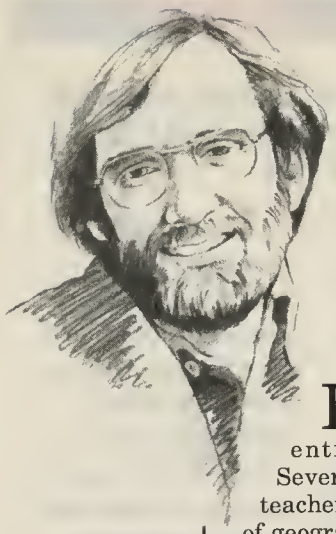

EDUCATION LINK

by Rea Andrew Redd

NO PROBLEMS, ONLY SOLUTIONS

In the spring, National Public Radio (NPR) produced a week-long feature entitled "Computers in the Classroom." Several NPR reporters interviewed students, teachers and administrators from a wide variety of geographic regions on such questions as "What are the best uses of computers in classrooms?" "Are teachers being overlooked in computer literacy?" "Does technology widen the gap between the rich and the poor?" Well-produced radio programs capture individuals' thoughts in a unique manner. The following are several quotes that pinpoint problems, issues, and solutions; now remember, readers, these are ordinary, thoughtful people, like you and me.

Rea Andrew Redd lives and works in southwestern Pennsylvania where he manages a high school library, teaches European history and Scholastic Achievement Test preparation. On occasion, he reenacts American Civil War battles with the Ninth Pennsylvania Reserves, an historic, military impression unit. E-mail Rea at: redd@genesis.duq.edu

ON TEACHER TRAINING:

Becky (North Carolina elementary teacher): "You can use some of what you already know, yet there's always more to learn. There's more choices to make, and (these) choices are probably some of the hardest activities that you're going to do on a computer."

Tom (former teacher, presently software designer): "Unfortunately, if you try to start a movement to get teachers to have computers on their desks, you run into administrative and parental pressure right away to make technology student-centered, which is a lovely goal, of course. But in the meantime, we're skipping the teacher."

Susan (Washington, teacher): "You don't teach a first-grader to write by having him share a pencil with ten other students... How do you train teachers to become comfortable with technology? You give them the technology."

ON TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY:

Becky: "I see my role as (a) facilitator. I move around the room, and I help them make decisions. And I help them learn without telling them an exact answer. So, unlike a teacher that used to stand in front of the room and tell you, 'This is the way,' I'm guiding their thinking."

David (North Carolina, school board member): "You know, you can't plug a kid into a machine and expect that machine to meet the emotional, psychological, and development needs of children."

Mike (Washington, teacher coordinator): "The computer with its (Internet and World Wide Web) versatility, allows children to express themselves in multiple ways... the computer allows students to create presentations of their learning. It's a high-stakes task."

ON BEING A STUDENT IN A TECHNOLOGY-RICH CLASSROOM:

Polly (Ohio, junior): "When I come here, I don't see black or white, poor or rich. I mean, I don't look at somebody and say, 'You know, they're poor.' I look at somebody and say, 'Oh, they can help me with my spreadsheet.' "

Ralph (North Carolina, school board member): "Technology is not going to take our most disadvantaged youngsters and put then on an even par with someone who's had all these advantages."

ON PARENTS, TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION:

Larry (Ohio, district superintendent): "The school that is rich in technology without good parental support, without good instruction leadership or a shared vision, is just another school with a lot of hardware."

NETTEACH NEWS

A new electronic and print magazine for K-12 educators starts up this school year. *NetTEACH News* is a newsletter for those who are pioneering in the Internet and education. Designed for novices and experienced teachers, *NetTEACH News* covers successful lesson plans, federal initiatives, new books, discussion lists, and firsthand accounts of newbies and vets struggling to integrate the Internet into their classroom situations and school districts.

Each issue includes coverage of K-12 networks, networking organizations, and projects, as well as, interviews of networking teachers, activists, and system administrators. Both hard copy and ASCII electronic copies are available; site licensing on K-12 is an option. Discounts are available for multiple subscriptions to school districts. Subscription rates range from **$15** to **$30**. Contact Kathy Rutkowski, **mailto:** kmr@cnri.reston.va.us or 13102 Weather Vane Way, Herndon, VA 22071 USA **(703)471-0593**.

AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'? NOT!

If your interests lie in the psychology of misbehavior and other social problems, then the book *School Discipline: The Art of Survival* is essential. Chapters with titles like "If You Can't Control 'Em, You Can't Learn 'Em" offer practical firsthand accounts of what can and should be achieved with classroom behavior. Mark Roberts is also offering

information on the following forums: Educational Administration and Supervision, Applied Education Research, Teacher Education, and Special Education. Write to "Publisher" at 74774.2722@compuserve.com; thanks Mark!

THE E-MAIL BAG

Charlie Ferreira, a Miami, Florida journalism major, is looking for research studies and practical tips concerning the use of BBSs for communication between faculty members and students, academic BBS startup procedures, and a BBS for journalism. Please send your insights to **mailto:**Charlie.Ferreira@379.sunshine.com

George Willett would like to introduce you to LES-COM-net. The Lesley College Communication Network is a multi-line BBS at (303)933-3088 created by Willett and sponsored by Lesley College of Cambridge, Massachusetts. LES-COM-net was created one weekend in November, 1984, prompted by a vision to support the teaching of Lesley College students. Lesley's Introduction to Telecommunications course is designed to be taught with the help of this BBS. One phone line, a 64K Apple, a 1200 baud modem, two floppy disk drives along with GBBS software put wheels on the vision. Many years of single line Apple upgrades followed.

In the summer of 1992, Willett changed to NovaLink Pro and a MAC. Expandability and multitasking give the MAC possibilities that were never available with the Apple. Lesley College has embraced the vision and expanded to a fast, multiline system with ample RAM and disk space. All modems are at least 14.4 Kbps (v.32bis). A full-time SLIP connection to the Internet along with FidoNet capabilities make a plethora of information available. LES-COMnet carries the K12Net with 32 worldwide echoes for students and educators, the FidoNet with echoes requested by users, Internet newsgroups, USA Today-Online and libraries for uploading and downloading. Private groups on LES-Comnet include Jefferson County Parent/Teachers Association newsgroup, Higher Order Thinking Skills (H.O.T.S.) Teachers forum and Lesley College's COMP 7005 Class groups. Telnet capabilities and Internet mail are available with more Internet services coming this autumn. For more information contact George Willett at **mailto:**George.Willett@lescom.denver.co.us or **telnet://**lescom.denver.co.us or **http://**lescom.denver.co.us

Jeffrey W. Gettleman, vice president of Western Schools, Inc., is looking for a DOS-based authoring program for creating executable education programs with tests (true/false, multiple choice) attached. The compiled programs must be able to run on anything down to an XT with a monochrome monitor. He does not need Quest or another multimedia authoring package, even CBT Express is "too fancy" for his application. Do you know of any off-the-shelf programs like this? Let him know with a phone call **(619)469-2121** , ext. **200**, a fax **(619)469-9021** or **mailto:**jwg@wschools.com

Mike Eisenberg, Jane Janis and Richard Tkachuck have put together an Education Showcase that provides a catalog of professional organizations, products, and services useful to librarians, educational administrators, and teachers. To list your item call them at **(315)443-3558** or **mailto:**showcase@npac.syr.edu

Linda Moore and the Education Reform Group are producing a series of videos on the Internet and the World Wide Web. Designed especially for educators, these tapes include a step-by-step lesson in connecting your computer to the Net, e-mail, gopher, telnet, Archie, and FTP. The first tape in the series is "The Internet: Your Lesson in Navigating the Information Superhighway—A How-To Guide to Mining Its Treasures." Give Linda Moore and the Educational Reform Group a call **(800)638-9434** or **(203)834-0144**, a fax at **(203)761-1479** or send fat mail to 76 Glenview Lane, Wilton, CT 06897.

Bill Newmiller and the United States Air Force have developed a WWW site honoring the 100th anniversary of the publication of Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* and supporting the November, 1995, conference that will celebrate this literary anniversary. Queries on the conference can be sent to **mailto:**bill%dfeng@dfmail.usafa.af.mil and you can hit the Web site at **http://**www.usafa.af.mil/dfeng/crane.htm

The Family Preservation Society is a California non-profit corporation founded by two California deputy public defenders. The organization operates the Family Preservation Society BBS, which can be found at **(408)996-8473**. You may also wish to fatmail Thomas J. Spielbauer, P. O. Box 71, San Jose, CA 95103 or fax a letter to (408)996-8457 or call (408)299-7226 him. The Society receives email; send messages to family@ix.netcom.com or familynet@aol.com

MEMO FROM THE DEEP POCKETS DEPARTMENT

"Funding Opportunities for K-12 Distance Learning Programs" is a May, 1995 conference available on audio tape from the Star Schools Project of the US Department of Education. For more information and a list of upcoming programs aired over the Pacific Mountain Network call Molly McGill **(303)837-8000**, send a fax to **(303)837-9797** or write her (Pacific Mountain Network, 1550 Park Avenue, Denver, CO 80218-1661.

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Time-Warner's Pathfinder magazine collection: **http://**pathfinder.com

Information on lesson plans for Internet education: **http://**www.wentworth.com/classroom

Humor archives: **http://**www.tc.cornell.edu/~ckline/humor/maillist.html

Telecommunication information resources: **http://**ippsweb.ipss.lsa.umich.edu/telecom/telecom-info.html

Netsurfer's Digest: **http://**www.netsurf.com

A student-produced newspaper from Ralph Bunche Elementary School in Harlem, NYC: **http://**mac94.ralphbunch.rbs.edu

WWW pages from a wide variety of elementary, middle and high schools: **http://**www.wentworth.com/classweb

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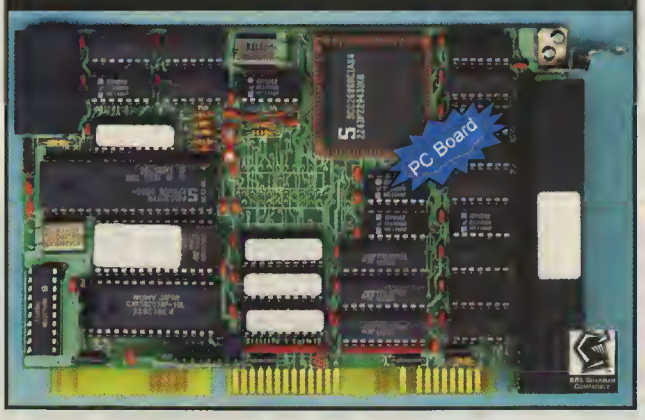

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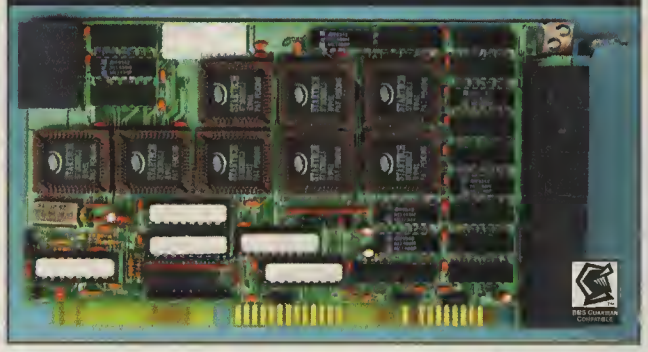

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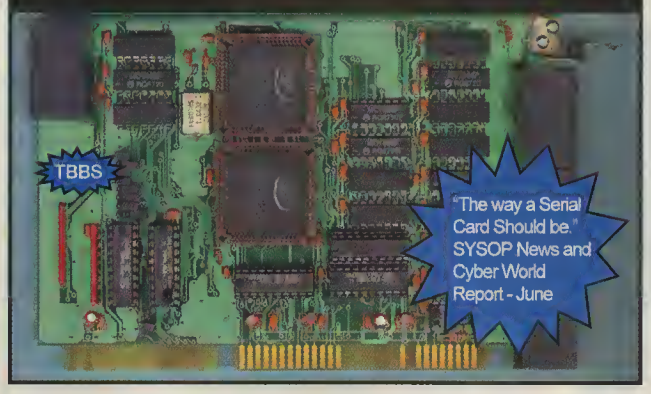

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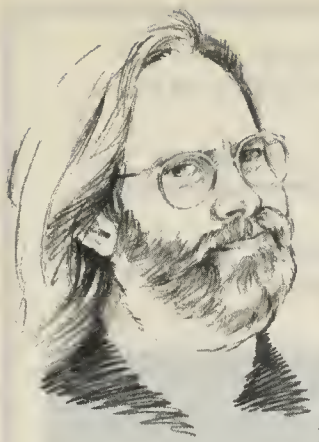

BEGINNER'S LUCK

by Doug Shaker

MOTHRA - STUCK IN THE WEB!

I'm writing this column from my trade show booth at a Smalltalk conference in San Jose. Jack Rickard says that less than 1/4 of 1% of the populace understands what object-oriented programming really means. Well, a lot of the people who really understand object-oriented technology are here. I'm trying to sell them software. At this trade show, the exhibits are closed when the technical sessions are open and vice versa. My customers are attending sessions and I am sitting in the empty booth, writing.

I've been working on my web page this month. My web page work was initiated by an e-mail message I got from one of my users. Nik Zordan lives in Italy and uses the Internet to contact my system. Nik is a nice young programmer who produces lots of Smalltalk programs. Some of these he distributes as freeware; some he distributes through my mail-order business, The Smalltalk Store. My web page is, for the most part, a catalog for my business.

> ***"I had a readable, but brain dead, web page."***

Nik took a look at my sorry excuse for a web page and decided it needed some improvement. If you read my column a few months ago, you may remember that I created this web page by exporting my catalog from my publishing program, and importing it into Microsoft Word. Then I used **CUHTML**, a freeware MS Word macro from Chinese University in Hong Kong, to generate an HTML document from the Word file. CUHTML got me a reasonable web page with almost no work.

However, it wasn't all gravy. There were some syntax errors in the HTML that CUHTML generated. HTML is really a system of markers. Most of the markers come in pairs. The first one turns on an attribute and the second one turns it off. For example, if your document says **This is just an <I> electronic </I> comic book** then you are telling the client web browser that you want the word "electronic" to be italicized. The **<I>** turns the italic attribute on and the **</I>** turns the italic attribute off. When CUHTML generated my web page, some of the attribute pairs were incomplete; I had some <I> tags that started italicization but no </I> tags to end italicization.

At the time, I was using **Lynx**, a text-only web browser. Lynx interpreted my HTML just fine so I couldn't see the problem. However, on Mosaic, my web page was awful. This was a problem because Mosaic is a pretty popular web browser. After one or two of the opened-but-unclosed attributes, the Mosaic representation of my web page would shrink into really really REALLY tiny type. Most people just looked at it and said, "Hmmm, Shaker sure knows how to screw up a web page." However, every three days or so, I would get an e-mail from some kind person who would debug some of my HTML and point out the next error. I'd correct that error, only to have someone else point out another error 500 characters further on. After about a month, all of the ugly HTML errors had been eliminated and I had a readable, but brain dead, web page.

The reason I say "readable, but brain dead" is that the web is a hypertext system. A hypertext system needs links. If you write screens and screens of text with no hyperlinks, then you are writing text, not hypertext, and you are writing bad web pages. My web page was pretty bad — nine screens long with not a hyperlink in sight.

So Nik saw the problem and went to work on it. He did a lot of stuff for my web page. He added an index, and links from the index entries to the individual items in the catalog. Then he added links back to the index from the catalog items. He added a link so that users could e-mail orders to me from their web browser. And, because Nik wants to move to the US and do Smalltalk programming, Nik added a link from the catalog entry for his product to his own web-page resume.

One of the problems Nik didn't fix was a problem I have with the price list entries in my catalog. They were supposed to look like this:

Framistams	List	TSS Price
San Jose Framistams	$299	$129
Monterey Bay Framistams	$349	$149

But they were coming out looking like this:

Framistams List TSS Price
San Jose Framistams $299 $129
Monterey Bay Framistams $349 $149

It took me a while to figure out why and the why is an interesting story.

HTML is a pretty funny formatting language. Ordinarily, formatting languages try to be as precise

Doug Shaker runs a one-person mail-order business supplying Smalltalk software to Smalltalk developers. He started his BBS in early 1995 as an adjunct to his business. He wishes he knew what he was doing, but he sees no chance of that happening anytime soon. You can send Doug e-mail at doug@smalltalk.com or you can connect to his BBS at (415)854-5581. You may also telnet to his BBS at bbs.smalltalk.com. Doug has five modems, four computers, three phones, two children and one wife. They keep him busy.

as possible. PostScript, for example, will let you describe graphics as precisely as you want. It remembers your precise description and renders it as well as the print or display device allows. This precision allows for beautiful output on a variety of devices.

On the other hand, HTML tries to be a formatting language that is as vague as possible. In some sense, it *needs* to be vague. The problem is that the web server can't know on what type of device or at what resolution the outgoing web pages will be displayed. It doesn't know whether the pages will be displayed on a text device or a GUI-based system. It doesn't know the width of the window or screen it will be displayed on. In the face of such unknowns, the people who designed the web software had a design choice to make. They could have created a system that tried to adapt the page to the display device at the cost of enormous amounts of processing and huge amounts of programmer time. Or they could make the formatting language vague and thereby easy to compute and use.

They chose to make it vague and easy. It must have been the right decision, because it sure is popular. However, the result is that you can't specify a font size — you specify a level of importance. For example, headings are **H1**, **H2**... through **H6** with **H1** being the most important and **H6** being the least. You can't request that your web page headline be in 36 point type. All you can ask for is **H1** and then trust the web browser to do something appropriate. The thing that kills me is that you can't use tabs — tabs have too many different interpretations on different display systems. Most web browsers just ignore tabs, altogether.

Where does that leave me and my catalog? Well, if you really need to do the kind of stuff I want on my web page, you can put the table into a monofont (typography lingo for a font in which all of the characters are the same width), use spaces instead of tabs, then use the **<PRE>** marker to indicate to the web client that your section of text is preformatted. This all strikes me as really, really crude, but so far no one has died and made me King of the Internet. I guess I'll have to live with it.

And live with it, I do, as I plod through my web page and change each of the 70 places that need to be converted so they will stop looking stupid. Oh well, the trade show is long. If my battery holds out, I can probably get it done.

AOL DISKETTES

A few months ago, I claimed to be aghast — though actually I have yet to complete all of the extensive state and federal ghast requirements — at the number of AOL diskettes that I was receiving. I invited you, oh beloved readers, to submit inventive suggestions as to what to do with all those diskettes. The suggestions came tumbling in at a fair pace. Then some energetic soul posted an excerpt from my column on the news group **alt.aol-sucks** and, lo and behold, the suggestions rushed in.

• RECYCLING

Eric Rosenberger say, *"Actually, I have all of my Compuserve files backed up onto them."*

Larry Drum runs a Worldgroup BBS and claims to *"use (AOL disks) to copy Worldgroup client software for my customers. Thank you AOL!"*

Davis Robinson uses them for *"RIPterm 1.54 or some other good comm program... Stick a new label on it and mail it to my user."*

• HOME IMPROVEMENT

Scott Orheim: *"One AOL disk happens to be the perfect thickness to use as a shim under one leg of my pool table."*

The sysop at **krdata.com** cuts them into 1/2 inch squares and uses the bits as spacers between modems to help with heat dissipation.

• PORTABLE PROTECTION

Tina Koyama carries them in her purse to *"put under the short leg of the inevitable rocky table in restaurants."* She also recommends them for pest removal - specifically *"throwing at large spiders"* and *"chucking at people who talk during movies."*

• ARTS & CRAFTS

Kenny Richards suggested, *"I'm sure someone will be needing a new dress for the Academy Awards next year."*

Bryan Wann: *"A clock kit with letters can be had for about $8. All you have to do is punch a 3/8" hole through the plastic jacket's middle, put it in, and stick the numbers on it."*

Mr. Unknown (**northcut@mindspring.com**) says "Melt the edges, turn them up, and use them for disposable ashtrays."

David Cassel claims they make *"really lame earrings."* Can't argue with you there, David.

Michael King thinks *"maybe I should glue them together to make a doll house for my two daughters."*

• DISK ABUSE

Todd Enlund says AOL disks *"make great skeet!"*

Jani Briggs gives *"them to our dog as chew toys. They don't last long, but we get a steady stream of them. What the heck!"* Kris Rees uses them to play dog Frisbee.

John Fitzmorris suggests *"noisemakers for bicycles."*

I think AOL disks would make dandy doors for the homes of moles.

• THE WINNING SUGGESTION!

But my all time favorite, best of its class, first prize suggestion came from Michael (Mad Max) Poulos whose signature file says, *"When I collect two solar masses of AOL disks, I will use them to detonate the Sun."* He elaborates in his personal FAQ:

"By adding 2 solar masses of AOL Disks(tm) to the Sun, you'll recreate the chemical composition of a star ready to supernova (explode). The explosion will vaporize the entire solar system and destroy life everywhere within 30 light years! That's a bomb!"

Congratulations, Mr. Poulos, on your thoroughly irrational suggestion! With that kind of thinking, maybe you will be selected as the next head of marketing at AOL!

If you want to look at my web page, tune in to **http://www.smalltalk.com**. If you want to see the complete list of suggestions that I received, call my BBS at **(415)854-5581** or **telnet://bbs.smalltalk.com** and look in the discussion forum called **maillist.coasters** ◆

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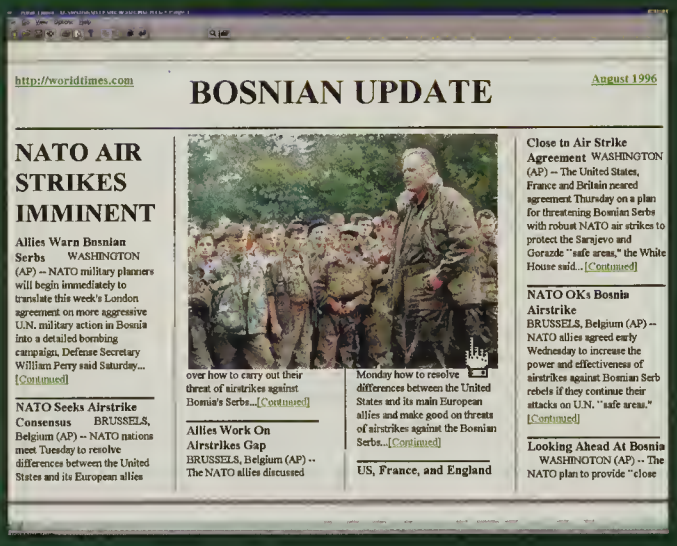

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MACINTOSH NEWS

by Bill Gram-Reefer

MAC WEB SERVER DOMINATES COMMERCIAL WEB MARKET

According to a recent study conducted by the Graphics, Visualization and Usability Center (GVA) at the Georgia Institute of Technology, StarNine's Macintosh-based WebStar product line commands 66% of the market for commercially available Web servers and 20% of the overall Web server market. According to the survey, WebStar products account for 66% of the commercial servers used, with WinHTTP being the second most widely used. NetScape Communications' Netsite server held 11%, with other commercial servers accounting for less than 10%.

Bill Gram-Reefer, based in Concord, CA, is president of WORLDVIEW, specializing in connectivity and communications. His Online Services column appears monthly in MicroTimes. E-mail Bill at **reefer@worldview-bbs.com**

The server usage study was part of GVU's third extensive online survey conducted as a public servic. Hit **http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/user_surveys/** for preliminary results. The survey was conducted from April 10 through May 10, 1995 and was endorsed by both the World Wide Web Consortium and the National Center for Supercomputing Applications. You can reach StarNine at **(800)525-2580** or by **mailto:info@starnine.com** or via the Web at **http://www.starnine.com**

PCMCIA MODEMS FOR NEW POWERBOOKS

Although Apple's new line of PowerBooks are built on the PowerPC platform and include room for PC Card Slots, they do not include a special slot for internal modems, nor do they offer any built-in Ethernet connections. Given the expanding importance of communications, especially as mobile users increasingly employ PowerBooks in a variety of field applications, the lack of modem and Ethernet connections makes users turn to third-party solutions.

One such product is Global Village's PowerPort PC Cards that are designed to provide reliable and easy to use plug and play performance. Type II PCMCIA cards, the PowerPort series is designed specifically for PowerBooks and comes in three flavors: the PowerPort Gold 14,400 bps, the Platinum supporting V.34 at 28,800 bps, and the Platinum Pro which supports not only 28,800-bps speeds but also includes a handy Ethernet connection. The Platinum Pro gives users of these new PowerBooks the ability to not only log onto remote e-mail via Internet or dial-up access to commercial services or company databases, but to also connect to the local area network when visiting the home office.

Within PCMCIA circles, there has always been several groups of thinking on how exactly to handle the placements of the actual phone jacks. The Ben Franklin school, for instance, eager to employ PCMCIA cards instead of kites and keys in their electricity experiments involving lightning, produces PCMCIA modems that include a pop-out jack that is part of the actual card; sort of an extendible lightning rod that also can break off. Others have designed their cards to work with a separate piece that links the card that is placed in the slot of the computer with the phone line. FCC aside, there has been no small amount of debate on this point.

Global Village safely takes the latter route with its PowerPort series by introducing Clyde, a separate adaptor, where one end connects to the card and you connect your telephone and/or network line to the other end. In the instance of the Pro, Clyde sports both RJ-11 and RJ-45 jacks. All of the PowerPorts support 14,400 Class II faxing and include GlobalFax 2.5 software. Only the Platinum and Platinum Pro include GlobalFax OCR software and only these two support optional Cellular connections.

From the get-go, Global Village has always tried to distinguish itself within a hotly competitive Macintosh modem marketplace by providing top-notch (at least in the case of its fax capabilities) front-end software. The company continues this legacy by providing a variety of enhancements. There is of course the double-click installer which includes remote access connection files for eWorld, cc:Mail, and other services. Faxing includes ECM error correction and support for QuickDraw GX, while the QuickLauncher application gives you configurable desktop access to all of your communications applications through one icon. All of the software is accelerated for PowerPC and supports AppleGuide.

A neat touch is that within AppleGuide, Global Village includes a reference to all of the known AT commands to help users set up strings containing pauses or other special actions. Additionally, the PowerPort series offers enhanced hot swapping to augment Apple's generic hot swapping so you can place your PowerPort PC card in either of the computer's slots without having to restart, reconfigure, or relaunch your communications software. Of note, the PowerPort Platinum cards are automatically configured to send data at speeds up to 115 Kbps, bypassing the limitations of many communications applications stuck on the 57.6 Kbps plateau. Expect estimated street prices to run from just under **$200** for the Gold to **$600** for the Platinum Pro.

EWORLD OPENS ITS GOLDEN GATE, ADDS WEB SERVICE

In the past, I have expressed some dissatisfaction with eWorld. But it's starting to grow up and maybe

so am I. Hence the harshness of my original reports soften somewhat here, although I still think the content and vendor service areas need attention. Apple Computer's eWorld online service celebrated its June 95 birthday with the release of its new version that delivers a pot full of enhancements and features. Code-named "Golden Gate," eWorld's online environment now provides more support, speed, and Internet services including access to the world wide web.

Prior to the launch of MS Network (slated for August 24), eWorld faced the notoriety and challenges of being the first commercial online service to launch in many years. After going up against the established gray beards in CompuServe, Delphi, America Online and Prodigy, eWorld executives acknowledge that mistakes were made and lessons learned. In fact, some sources within eWorld freely admit to the current public relations activity surrounding the Golden Gate release as the mea culpa tour (See Macintosh News, in this publication's May, 1995).

What with MS Network, Pipeline, AT&T Interchange and others joining the fray for online profits, eWorld is more than penitent, aiming to set right those early mistakes and move on. Originally, eWorld, like most Apple products, was priced too high, while the lack of a free trial offer and a delay in full bundling with all Macintosh systems limited acceptance. But the autumn of 1994 brought a free trial, a price break occurred at the beginning of this year, and more bundling and consistent ramping of content has helped double eWorld's base of subscribers to about 100,000 and over 275 content providers. eWorld's numbers are encouraging with a high percentage of "active" users and a 60% retention rate, while some online shopping vendors admit that eWorld subscribers, bucking wider trends, are heavier shoppers than on other online services.

The new version of eWorld is already building on these positive indicators. The first thing I noticed was that the GoldenGate rev appears a lot faster. Expanded 14.4 Kbps access into 250 U.S. cities especially paves the way for expanded Internet services including USENET newsgroups, FTP file servers, and searchable mail lists. Also, eWorld adds the ability to log onto the service over the Internet providing for the possibility of much faster access times beyond 14. Kbps or even 28.8 Kbps throughput. It all looks a lot like AOL since both services share the underlying software.
Since eWorld's subscribers fall increasingly into "traditional" Apple categories (home, education, and small business and creative users) the service has introduced unique features to provide increased support to those specific audiences. For instance, Apple users can take advantage of expanded, direct online support from Apple, where, it is promised, questions or computer problems posted to eWorld's Customer Center will be given a personal answer by Apple support staff within 24 hrs. Other ease-of-use features include "Intelligent Mail" that helps users manage their mail better with routines that can file, process and even automatically respond to new messages. Users can also maintain and manage a variety of address books, even send them to other users, or be automatically routed to a specific area when logging on.

Content presentation has always been the mantra for eWorld, especially as online services become more important venues for advertisers (O.K., call them "content providers.") According to Apple, "online services today are about data — some call it shovelware. Successful mass media is not about data, it is about emotion, personality, attitude, and point of view." The key focus for Apple, from day one, has always been to provide a context that helps make content compelling and meaningful to subscribers.

eWorld has introduced its new "Compound Multi-Media Document Architecture" that lets publishers create provocative documents or pages that combine text and graphics into a seamless easy-to-navigate whole. The presentation of content motif has also driven the introduction of other new features and tools that will increasingly allow users and publishers to have more control over the presentation environment. A "Calendar Viewer" notifies users of events of particular interest. There is also the ability to "listen" to speakers in a conference using Apple's evolving PlainTalk technology. eWorld even allows for playful variations of the town square that users download into their art folders alternative scenes depicting Winter, Martian, high desert, or holiday-themed backdrops.

The "presentation" theme also works its way into the Internet services as well. As online services increasingly become the gateway to the Internet, Apple is very aware that new users need help getting their bearings in the jumble that is the Internet. According to Hardie Tinkersley, Internet Services Product Manager for eWorld, "Most people are new to the net. Unlike direct Internet connections, eWorld just doesn't drop you into the morass, but provides context, pointers, and road signs to help users find their way more readily." Using its expertise in human interface design, the new release of eWorld will provide important support information, including help on topics as "What does HTTP mean?" to constantly updating the lists of interesting places to visit and hip goings-on around the net.

The eWorld web browser, strikingly similar to AOL's, is a licensed version of WebShark from InterCon Systems Inc. It incorporates support for most Internet standards including HTML 2.0, backgrounds, in line JPEG and GIF images, and CERN authentication. Pages are always active, too, so you don't have to wait for a page to load before you click somewhere else. Plus eWorld maintains a cache of popular web sites in its own data center so that high-traffic areas can be accessed more readily. Like AOL, a number of web sites will be integrated into the main areas about eWorld's village for quicker access.

Moving beyond its own core service, eWorld is developing specific web pages to better serve its core audiences of educators, home and small business users. For instance, the Learning Center at **http://www.eworld.com** is a marvelous collection of pages divided into News, Apple Education Resources, Museum, School House, Library, and Government Center. In the School House you'll find a large number of links to K-12 and college-level web pages all over the world. With Apple's ongoing leadership in the education market, these pages deserve not only attention, but applause. ◆

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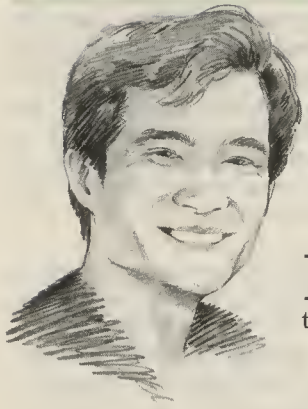


CompuServe

by Wallace Wang

Wallace Wang is the author of *CompuServe for Dummies*, *Procomm Plus for Dummies* and *Visual Basic for Dummies* (all published by IDG Books). He also does stand-up comedy in the San Diego area, and has appeared on A&E's *Evening at the Improv* TV comedy club. He can be reached via **mailto:70334.3672@compuserve.com.**

Now that CompuServe has plugged itself into the Internet and embraced the rest of the computer community, lots of unhappy subscribers have been complaining that accessing CompuServe has become next to impossible. Sometimes you may get a busy signal, other times you may get connected then disconnected for no apparent reason, and still other times you simply can not access CompuServe no matter how hard you may try.

If you're one of the few unhappy members facing these problems, the simplest solution is to call CompuServe's technical support number at **(800)848-8990**. Since it's a toll-free call, feel free to keep calling each time you have a problem.

As another solution, try another local access number, usually the 2400 baud access number (because fewer people use it), and then use the **GO FEEDBACK** command. From there, complain as loudly and as frequently as possible. To insure a reply right away, toss in a few references like, "I never have a problem connecting to America Online..." or "Gee, Prodigy is so much better at responding to customer complaints..."

For example, each time CompuServe's local 14.4Kbps access number refused to answer, I simply dialed into the local 2400 baud access number using Procomm Plus and sent a message to **GO FEEDBACK** for three days straight, often sending up to five messages a day. After three days, not only did my CompuServe access problems disappear, but CompuServe was kind enough to offer a $5.00 online credit for my trouble.

So use the **GO FEEDBACK** command as often as necessary. With the online competition heating up as Microsoft and AT&T plan to introduce their new online services, there's no reason why anyone shouldn't be getting the full service that they're paying for.

WORDPERFECT'S INTERNET PUBLISHER

Not to be left in Microsoft's dust as the Internet and Microsoft Word steamroll over the rest of the computer industry, Novell has introduced the ***WordPerfect Internet Publisher***, which lets you create and save documents in the hypertext markup language (HTML) so you can create your own web pages.

To use the WordPerfect Internet Publisher, not only must you have WordPerfect for Windows 6.1, but you must agree to a bizarre legal restriction that says you cannot be a:

1) resident or national of Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Syria, or Yugoslavia (which is comprised of Montenegro, Serbia and Serb-controlled sections of Bosnia-Hercegovina);

2) individual or entity that has been placed on the Table of Denial Order Listing (U.S. Department of Commerce), Specially Designated Nationals List (U.S. Department of Treasury), and/or Debarred List (U.S. Department of State);

3) entity or individual involved with the research, development, testing, evaluation, production, distribution, sale or service of nuclear, chemical, and/or biological weapons and/or missile technology;

Just in case you're an Iraqi soldier, planning to use WordPerfect and the WordPerfect Internet Publisher to create your own web pages for distributing information on modifying Scud missiles to drop chemical weapons on Saudi Arabia, you'll have to switch to Microsoft Word and their free Word Internet

Assistant program instead. But for the rest of us, use the GO WPIP command and download the **WPIPZI.EXE** file (1,720,205 bytes long) and have fun with your web pages.

THE TRAINNET FORUM

Perhaps the only time you can get a roomful of men to actually use the word "romantic" in a sentence (that isn't the butt of a joke) is when the subject focuses on trains. There's something romantic about watching a loved one standing on the train station platform as your train slowly pulls away, or staring out the window as your train snakes in and out of tunnels, crosses desert landscapes, and winds through mountain ranges that most people never see from the air or by car as they rush along the interstate highways in search of a clean rest room.

Although trains have forever lost their place as the primary mode of mass transit in America, they'll always remain in many people's hearts and memories. (After all, how many people build miniature interstate highways in their basements and spend countless hours pushing toy cars around on them?)

For those who work in the railroad industry, enjoy building miniature train sets, or just like talking about an era in transportation that has peppered history with famous stories of holdups, hobos, and train wrecks, visit the ***TrainNet*** forum (GO TRAINNET) and chat with Dorr Altizer, TrainNet's forum administrator.

Dorr initially joined CompuServe while serving active duty in the United States Air Force, where he ran a private BBS (using Wildcat!) for his F-16 fighter wing. By linking his BBS to what soon became the Internet, Dorr tied various F-16 units and civilian manufacturers together. Any time anyone needed help, information, or technical support, they could dial into his BBS and find the answer they were looking for.

In 1985, Dorr joined the ModelNet Forum on CompuServe and started leaving messages about trains and model railroads. Soon ModelNet opened two message sections (Railfans, Model Railroads) in response to the growing number of discussions by train enthusiasts. By early 1987, Dorr became an Assistant Sysop in the ModelNet forum to monitor these message sections.

As the activity in these two sections grew, Dorr began petitioning CompuServe for a separate forum of his own. After more than two years of convincing CompuServe that a railroad forum could be successful, CompuServe finally admitted the obvious and let Dorr open the TrainNet forum on February 1, 1989.

In the beginning, less than 400 people joined TrainNet, but after last six years total membership now tops more than 15,000, including representatives from the two largest railroad crafts unions, railroad historical societies and museums, model (and actual) railroad manufacturers, the Federal Railway Administration, and countless tourists and railroad enthusiasts. If it's related to trains in any way, you'll find it covered by the TrainNet forum

For a list of railroad oriented magazines, download the **RRMAGS_1.TXT** and **RRMAGS_2.TXT** files from Library 1 (The Roundhouse) For a list of railroad-related web sites, download the **WWW_LIST.TXT** from the same library.

In case you'd like to get involved in restoring an ancient steam locomotive, download the **RRHSTS.TXT** file from Library 20 (Tourist RRs/Museums), which lists various Railroad Historical and Technical Societies. Going on a trip? Download the **TOURIST.TXT** file for a list of tourist railroads and museums.

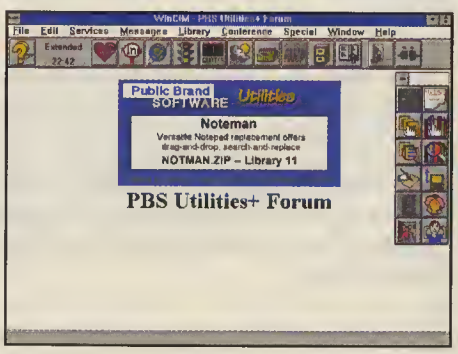
Of course, Dorr isn't the only one running TrainNet. Dorr takes prides in the entire TrainNet Forum staff, which "works together as an efficient team to provide a place for forum members to gather and share information, problems, solutions, news and friendship."

Some of the staff members include representatives from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, European Railways, Live Steam, National Railway Historical Society, and the United Transportation Union. (For a complete list and details of the TrainNet forum staff, download the **SYSOPS.TXT** file stored in Library 1, The Roundhouse.)

For file hounds, the TrainNet libraries contain over 350 megabytes worth of information, including a large collection of railroad photos (over 100 megabytes). So if you're looking for that perfect train picture for your latest desktop published newsletter or brochure, look in the TrainNet forum first, and be sure to drop Dorr a compliment on the TrainNet forum too.

GETTING THE LATEST WINDOWS 95 FILES

Now that Microsoft has unleashed Windows 95 on an unsuspecting public, you might want to know where CompuServe has stashed the latest Windows 95 shareware programs. Although many forums will eventually collect their own Windows 95 specific programs, the largest collection for now is the Public Brand Software Utilities Forum located on ZiffNet.



To access the Public Brand Software Utilities Forum in ZiffNet, use the GO PBSUTIL command. To access all seven Public Brand Software forums in ZiffNet, GO PBS. Just remember that ZiffNet is part of CompuServe's extended services and carries an additional membership fee. (GO ZIFFMEM for more details.)

If or when you decide to join ZiffNet, you'll find numerous Windows 95 specific programs, such as the compression utility ***WinZip for Windows NT*** (in the file **WZNT.EXE**), the popular Web browser, ***Mosaic*** (in the file **WMOSAC.ZIP**), and an investment tracker called ***CLR BullsEye*** (**BULEYE.ZIP**).

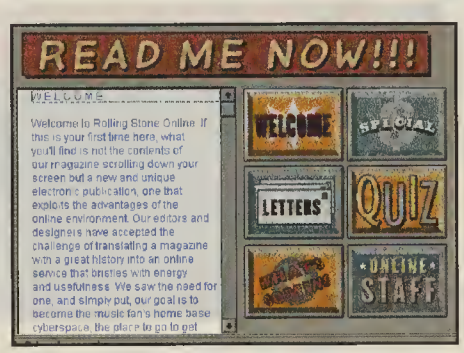
If we're lucky, maybe some thoughtful shareware author will even provide a utility to make Windows 95 obsolete so we don't have to read 500-page books that explainJ how easy Windows 95 is to learn and use.

ROLLING STONE ONLINE

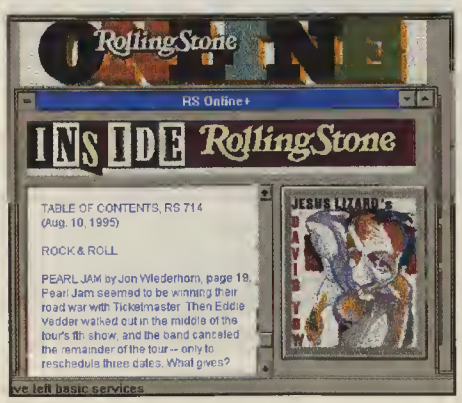
For one of the more colorful and graphically-oriented (which means it takes a long time to browse) online magazines, check out ***Rolling Stone Online*** (GO RSONLINE). Unlike other online magazines that display dull text from the printed version of the same issue, Rolling Stone Online goes all out and offers an interactive version of its cover stories.

Here you can download Apple QuickTime video clips (you'll need a movie viewer program to see it though) and sound files (both Macintosh and Windows versions) of the feature story. Listen to song bits, interviews, or watch videos of your favorite bands performing on stage.

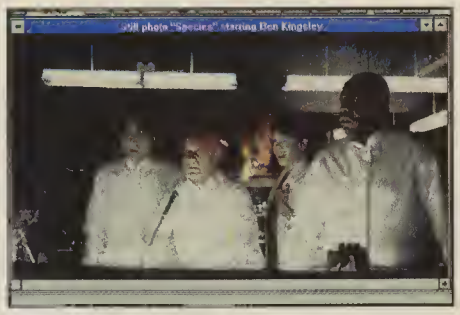
As an additional bonus, Rolling Stone Online also contains the latest news (updated daily) concerning all aspects of music, movies, and entertainment in general (except for the type that got



Hugh Grant in all that trouble). Browse through the latest music and video charts to see what's hot today. Read reviews of the latest albums so you don't get ripped off buying something that sounds worse than your grand-



mother's favorite music. Or take a trip back in time and browse through a randomly selected issue from the past, and read about rock bands that you remembered while growing up in high school.



To meet other music and video enthusiasts, visit the Rolling Stone forum (GO RSFORUM) where you can chat with other members and explain to teenagers that the Beatles really were a cool group at one time, view digitized photographs of your favorite rock bands, movies, and movie stars (the nude pictures of Drew Barrymore seem to be popular for some odd reason), and even try to line up a gig for your own band once in a while.

For the best coverage of the music and entertainment business, make a regular visit to Rolling Stone Online as often as possible. If you thought MTV revolutionized the television network industry, wait until you see what Rolling Stone Online might do to the online service world as well. ◆

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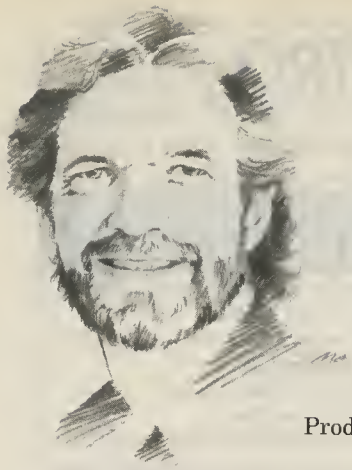


PRODIGY

by Ric Manning

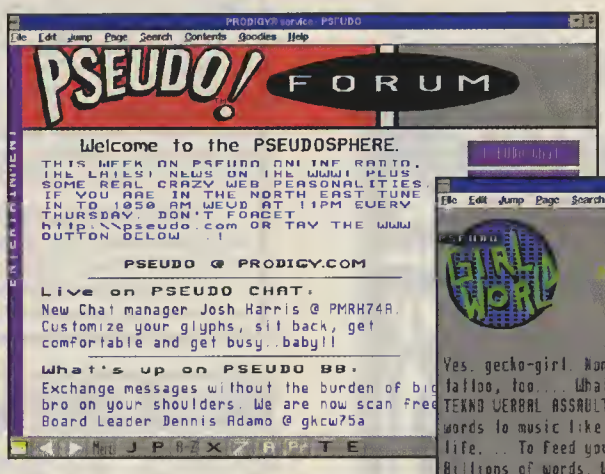
A NEW HANGOUT FOR THE PSEUDO YOU

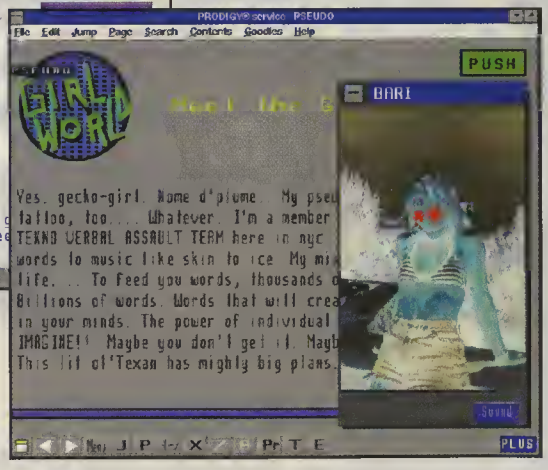
Despite what you may have heard, Joshua Harris says ***Pseudo*** is not Prodigy's back-alley peep show.

Yes, Pseudo visitors will read some strong language on the bulletin boards and chat rooms. They might see a thigh or a breast in some of the photo exhibits. After all, one of the exhibits is called ***Flesh Art***.

But Harris, whose company Jupiter Interactive created and runs Pseudo, says Pseudo is more like a stroll through New York's Soho art district than a walk past the skin shops on Times Square.

"People think it is an adult forum, which it is not," said Harris. "Everyone on our board is a New York-based artist and anything you see there it would not be unusual to see in a gallery or coffeehouse. I think it's a mature area rather than an adult area and I think there's a difference. We're an R-rated movie, or maybe an NC-17."





Jupiter, a New York multimedia developer, got hooked up with Prodigy when it was hired to write the software for Prodigy Chat. Harris said he proposed the Pseudo concept to former Prodigy Vice President Scott Kurnit who gave him the green light.

Former Prodigy President Ross Glatzer, however, was a little skittish about Pseudo's adult content; the service didn't appear on Prodigy until Glatzer retired and Ed Bennett took over. Even then, Prodigy members were more likely to hear about Pseudo in the media than from Prodigy itself.

Prodigy officials say that Pseudo is an example of Prodigy's move toward an open network that can be used by outside information providers. Prodigy spokesman Brian Ek says the service has "a business relationship" with Jupiter and does not make judgments on its content. Ek says that despite the nudity and raunchy postings on Pseudo, it's not necessarily out of character for an online service that is marketed heavily to children and families.

PARENTAL CONTROLS AVAILABLE

"I think probably too much has been made of this whole family thing," said Ek. "Prodigy has been equated to kids, but for years we've offered services such as stock quotes that are aimed at an adult audience. We give you the tools" to keep kids out of adult-interest areas, Ek said. "We don't intend to be a surrogate parent for anyone."

Ek pointed out that Prodigy requires that A-level subscribers — the ones responsible for the Prodigy account — must be 18. Pseudo displays a strongly-worded caution screen the first time you try to `JUMP PSEUDO`. Pseudo won't admit anyone who doesn't have either an A-level ID or clearance from the adult who controls the account.

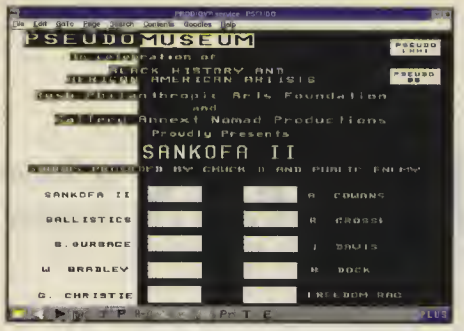
INSIDE PSEUDO

Once inside Pseudo, you may wonder what all the fuss is about. A section called ***Girl World*** isn't a T&A show, its a collection of work by female poets and performance artists. A recent lineup included Anne Elliott, Janice Earlbaum, Irene Lavinia and someone called Gecko Girl. ***The Male Room*** next door features spoken word artists such as Harold Bowser, Joe Jelic and Steve Marcus who happen to be of the other gender. Each artist is showcased in a series of screens that contain text, pictures and sounds.

Other features include a music section with clips from avant-garde bands such as Warrior Soul, Skadank's, Captain Space Sex. There are hot licks in the ***Pseudo Museum***, too, where Public Enemy might be on the soundtrack.

Ric Manning writes about business technology, computers and consumer electronics for *The Courier-Journal* in Louisville, Ky. His weekly column called *Home Tech* is distributed to more than 80 newspapers by the Gannett News Service and it's available on the World Wide Web **http://iglou.com/gizweb**

Ric was the founding editor of *Plumb* and *Bulletin Board Systems*, two newsletters that covered the BBS arena in the early 1980s. His freelance work has appeared in several magazines including *PC/Computing*, *Mobile Office*, *PC Week* and *Home Office Computing*. Ric lives in Southern Indiana with his wife, two children and a champion Weimaraner. Write to Ric at **mailto:ricman@iglou.com**



Even in the Flesh Art section, the scene is more racy than raunchy. Artist Jeff Gompertz, who did work for the early issues of *Future Sex* magazine, created an exhibit called ***Robotic Erotica*** using a collection of sampled images. It was his work that made Glatzer nervous.

"It's not that explicit," said Gompertz. "It's kind of a unique vision of a bio-techno-organic amalgam of sorts. It's people that are partially machine made."

The story that accompanies the art does tend to hyperventilate: *"NAGOMI sat patiently as she awaited her next sex partner. She autoscanned her memory and found the symptoms of self stimulation in an old text directory as SEX SELF, wow. Could it be true can this be achieved. The sex-fiend cybot had to wait not a moment longer. She slowly found her way to her hot spot."*

SWINGING MEMBERS FIND EACH OTHER

But you can read much stronger dialogue in the bulletin board and chat areas. "The postings were getting a little lurid," said Harris. "We didn't realize we would get this kind of traffic and we've started asking them not to use the F word."

That request must have been made after Aimee Swinfard posted her blunt request: "Bi-Fem wants to..." the "F word." Swinfard, who described herself in a telephone interview as a 22-year-old college student, housewife and sexual adventurer, said that posting produced loads of mail.

Pseudo, she said, is the kind of uncensored online forum that she's been looking for. "I'm a bi-fem and it's not easy to go out to a bar and talk to people," she said. "I've met a lot of interesting people online and made a few good friends. People can be whoever they want to be online, but you find a lot of people who will be truthful too. You can spend more time talking. In bars it's 'Hi, want to go home?'"

Swinfard said she's met several bisexual women through Pseudo, but not many close enough to her Southern California home to establish an offline relationship.

New Yorker Mike Rosado said he also got plenty of mail after he posted a message on Pseudo looking for a woman to be his first sexual partner.

> ***"I decided to post a message regarding my virginity. The next day, BAM! I received about 30 replies."***
>
> ***— Prodigy member Mike Rosado***

"I was pretty much browsing the message bases, and was reading some interesting topics on different types of people, talking about sex, from all over the world," he said via e-mail. "Being young and very unexperienced, I decided to post a message regarding my virginity. The next day, BAM! I received about 30 replies. I've met some very good people in the Pseudo Forum. If you ask me, the Pseudo Forum is a great place to meet people of all genders that associate with different types of sexual pleasures."

Jupiter's Harris doesn't disavow the sex talk, but he insists it's not Pseudo's main focus. "We have boards on other topics, like vampire fantasies and modern culture. And even when you go into the most lurid chat room and talk to people, it's like going into a bar. People are talking about everything." A planned exhibit on dead rock star Kurt Cobain will feed Harris's personal fetish for the grotesque and the macabre.

The whole point of Pseudo is to be a place online where people don't have to be all that they are in the physical world. "People have different faces," said Harris. "There's the physical body — which we don't care about — and there's the personality you have when you're online."

In other words, the Pseudo You. ◆

MICROSOFT NETWORK NEWS

by Durant Imboden

By now, you've read countless news reports about The Microsoft Network. You've heard the established online services grumble about unfair competition, and you've watched the Department of Justice play "Who's got the most testosterone?" with Bill Gates. But what you really want to know is how MSN could affect your own livelihood as a BBS operator or sysop. That's the focus of this new column, which will show how individuals and small businesses are creating niches with Microsoft's new online service.

But first, a glossary of what the opportunities are:

Contract forum managers operate the basic services, or general forums, on MSN. These "FMs" receive fixed monthly compensation, earn performance bonuses based on traffic and other criteria, and can charge download fees for material of their own creation.

Independent Contract Providers, or "ICPs," pay upfront fees, monthly service charges, and modest transaction royalties to be on MSN. Unlike contract FMs, these operators can sell advertising, make third-party arrangements with sponsors, and sell a wide assortment of goods.

Internet Business Partners have no direct involvement with The Microsoft Network, but merely link a World Wide Web site to a place on MSN in return for a monthly billboard fee. (I'll ignore them in this column, which is being written for *Boardwatch* rather than *Advertising Age*.)

And now, here are three examples from The Microsoft Network's first generation of contract forums and ICPs:

COMEDY CONNECTION FORUM

MSN's Comedy Connection forum illustrates Jo Ann Klein's belief that a good sysop can manage a forum on any general topic. "I started out as a user on Prodigy back in 1989," Jo Ann recalls. "Then I moved over to GEnie and became a category assistant in the Family and Public forums. By 1993, I worked for a network called NVN and ran the Family, Food & Wine, and Human Sexuality forums on Novalink. I landed on Delphi in 1994, where — among other things — I'm still the senior administrator of a teen forum that's run by teens."

JoAnn Klein, Comedy and Nursing Forums Manager

Last year, when The Microsoft Network was being developed, a former colleague suggested that Jo Ann contact Microsoft. She responded with a proposal for a comedy forum, since she was a long-time comedy fan and knew that humor was a popular topic with online users.

Jo Ann's proposal was accepted by Microsoft late in 1994, and she began laying out her Comedy Connection forum when MSN's beta sysop tools were released in March. She outlines her goals:

"I want this to be a forum for children of all ages — general audiences, kids, and adults. Every age group has areas for jokes, limericks, puns, other forms of word play, cartoons, and art. We also feature a professional comedians' area, a 'humor in the media' area, and a 'faces of comedy' area where we talk about clowning."

The Comedy Connection's founder is especially proud of her "online improv troupe," which will consist of users who perform for members once a week. "We'll have a cover charge as soon as MSN's transaction structure is in place," she says. "Earnings will be shared with the performers."

Durant Imboden is a freelance writer who manages the Writing forum in the Arts & Entertainment category of The Microsoft Network. His credentials include published novels, articles, and short stories; fiction editing and staff writing for Playboy; representing authors at a New York literary agency; and freelance copywriting for Lotus, Apple, Northwest Airlines, US West, and other national advertising accounts. When not typing, Durant is a volunteer announcer at local, state, and sectional figure-skating competitions. Mailto:Durant_Imboden_MSN on The Microsoft Network or writing@msn.com on the Internet. The author is not an employee or spokesman for Microsoft.

Jo Ann believes that creativity is an important quality for forum managers. As an example, she cites her forum's "WAV file contests," where users will record and upload 30-second standup routines that other MSN subscribers can download and play with their soundcards. "Members will vote on the best acts, and the winners will receive prizes," she says.

To generate additional income from her forum, Jo Ann — who goes by the user ID "Lulu" — intends to sell mugs and t-shirts to "Lulu's Chat Rooms" fans. She adds that chat areas such as "Lulu's Fruit Cellar Pub" and "Lulu's Back Room" have drawn a coterie of regulars since the Comedy Connection forum introduced scheduled conferences and offered MSN's first private chat rooms last spring.

NURSING NETWORK FORUM

Under the user ID of "Nurse," Jo Ann Klein also manages the Nursing Network forum on MSN. This forum is an expanded, GUI-based version of the Nursing Network that Jo Ann has operated on Delphi for several years. She describes the forum as "a one-stop professional mall for nurses." It provides information on careers, conferences, education, organizations, healthcare funding, nursing specialties, and other topics of interest to the nursing profession.

The Nursing Network forum also has a large Internet area with USENET groups and LISTSERV resources. Jo Ann hopes to add direct shortcuts to nursing-related World Wide Web pages in the near future. These shortcuts will let users click on an icon to launch a Web browser and go to any page in one easy step.

Continuing education has long been a major feature of the Nursing Network on Delphi, with access to internationally accredited programs through Delphi and three nursing Gophers on the Internet. Jo Ann intends to provide similar opportunities for nurses on MSN. She adds: "I also plan to offer nursing software tutorials, created specifically for The Microsoft Network, that will let users earn contact hours toward continuing education for licensure and certification."

To a layman, a forum like the Nursing Network may appear too specialized to draw a large audience or offer significant income potential. Jo Ann Klein's experience suggests otherwise. "The Nursing Network on Delphi has a loyal following. And even during the Windows 95 beta, the Nursing Network forum attracted nurses from all over the country."
When asked what skills are needed to manage an oddly matched pair of forums like the Comedy Connection and the Nursing Network, Jo Ann rattles off a list of attributes. "A forum manager needs to be creative, intelligent, articulate on paper, good with people, and willing to take risks. Being able to think and type quickly is important, especially in chat. Time management is essential — running a popular forum requires a minimum commitment of 8 hours a day, 7 days a week."

Forum Managers Jay Gunsauls (left) and Ken McAllister

INFERNO

At an early MSN forum managers' conference, a Microsoft Network official explained that "contract forum managers are here to build community, while independent content providers are here to make money."

Jay Gunsauls and Ken McAllister might argue with this definition. The co-proprietors of "Inferno" claim to be less interested in money than in providing a worldwide information resource for firefighters, other emergency-services workers, and the general public.

Jay is the fire chief of Bellingham, Washington and vice-president of the Washington Association of Fire Chiefs. Ken is a retired deputy chief in the Seattle suburb of Bellevue. Jay explains: "We got to thinking about computer communications last year, when a series of forest fires in Washington caused $50 million in damages and involved nearly 600 firefighters over several weeks. During that time, we constantly used fax machines, cellular phones, and radios to try and keep track of all those people. We realized there must be a better way to share information and resources."

Having used CompuServe and read newspaper stories on the "Information Superhighway," Jay Gunsauls and Ken McAllister decided that online communications might be the answer. "We wrote to Bill Gates," Jay explains. "We said we weren't looking for money, but were hoping someone at Microsoft could advise us on setting up a computer communications network in Washington. Microsoft responded by giving us front-page coverage in its internal newsletter and authorizing employees to help us on company time."

It wasn't long until the two firefighters were invited to the Microsoft campus in Redmond. "At our first meeting, we explained how ignorant we were about the Information Superhighway and how we'd be grateful for Microsoft's advice," recalls Jay. "They listened politely and told us to come back a week later. At our next meeting, we were given a non-disclosure agreement to sign. Then they told us about this new project called The Microsoft Network. They said they could help us solve our problem, but that we'd set our sights too low."

The idea of a computer communications network for Washington's emergency services gave way to a bigger concept: a worldwide network with a home on MSN. Microsoft's impromptu team of advisors suggested the name "Inferno," which Ken and Jay adopted on the spot.

The two men formed a corporation, signed a contract with Microsoft, and began designing their forum last

March. "Inferno is aimed at two major audiences," says Jay. "Firefighters and other professionals in emergency services, and the general public. We think this is a great way for emergency services to talk to each other, share information, and develop better communications with citizens."

When MSN's software developers give ICPs the ability to create private forums, Inferno will have subscription areas for firefighters and rescue workers. Professional organizations have already begun negotiating for space, and trade magazines are seeking online publishing opportunities with Inferno.

Advertising from manufacturers of fire and rescue equipment is expected to bring in more cash. "Our goal is to subsidize the public area with our earnings from the professional areas," Jay says. "We intend to have a high level of quality content for the general public — including multimedia on fire safety, injury prevention, and similar topics. We plan to offer firsthand reports on major fires and other emergencies from professionals who are on the scene. And we're working with the Federal Emergency Management Organization, or FEMA, to set up a meeting place where people can check on relatives in areas that have had a natural disaster."

Jay and Ken feel that an online service has advantages over traditional print media for communicating with the public. "If you're a citizen, you may not see a printed piece unless someone mails it to you or it's lying on the counter when you're touring a fire station. But when the information is online, you can easily search for it. Or you might run across it while browsing."

Inferno's public content isn't limited to information for adults. The forum has a kids' room with games, puzzles, and coloring books. As new MSN publishing tools such as Blackbird become available, Inferno will supply interactive experiences with fire- and injury-prevention themes. Educators have already been recruited to develop such materials.

Jay and Ken feel that their hard work and Microsoft's encouragement are beginning to pay off with media attention and recognition from professional organizations around the world.

"We were one of five MSN forums that got invited to a Microsoft demonstration before the recent E3 Conference in Long Beach," says Jay. "As a result of the demonstration, we were mentioned in the Wall Street Journal. And we've been asked to make a presentation to a conference of fire and emergency-services agencies from the seven largest industrialized countries."

Although Inferno is likely to generate substantial revenue through subscriptions, proprietary forums, and advertising, Jay Gunsauls and Ken McAllister aren't hoping to become millionaires from their new endeavor. "Inferno is mostly a labor of love," Jay insists. "We're determined not to go broke, but our real motivation is to create an unprecedented opportunity for fire and emergency services."

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU

"Great," you say. "So how can MSN make me rich, famous, or both?"

For an answer, load Windows 95 onto your PC and visit The Microsoft Network. You'll find assorted documents on opportunities for contract forum managers and independent contest providers. Tip: Many general forums still lack managers, and applicants with the right credentials are always in demand. (Just don't expect a quick response. At press time, MSN's system honchos and honchas were still wrestling with a backlog of FM and ICP applications.)

If you're an Internet provider in a small city, rural area or overseas location, you'll have another profit opportunity when MSN introduces low-cost, flat-rate access via the World Wide Web later this year. Users will be able to save long-distance charges to the nearest MSN access number by establishing a PPP account with you. MSN will get its few dollars a month, and you'll get the connect-time fees. Not a bad deal — for you or the end user. ◆

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by David Hakala

USERS OF SEIZED BBS FILE CLASS ACTION SUIT

BBS operators across the nation have been fighting a lonely battle against jackbooted "net cops" who seize their systems without cause or recourse. Such seizures harm everyone who uses a BBS, not just a system's owner. Several sysops have bankrupted themselves defending the constitutional rights of their users as well as their own. Finally, BBS users — in Cinncinnati, Ohio, at least — are joining the fray. Perhaps now the odds will be equalized.

Sheriff Simon L. Leis, Jr. and other members of the Hamilton County (Indiana) Computer Crimes Task Force raided the offices of the Cincinnati Computer Connection BBS on June 16, 1995. The impressively named gang of cops had a warrant authorizing them to search for 45 allegedly obscene computer images. Instead, they carted off the whole system — 23 computers, including two heavy-duty file servers, video display units, printers, software, data drives, and internal or external information storage units. The cops left the 18 rack-mounted modems because they could not carry the rack out the door.

The raid also netted the private and public electronic messages of 5000 to 7000 subscribers and trial users, and their private user profiles. On August 7, seven subscribers to the CCC BBS filed the first class action lawsuit of its kind, on behalf of all of the BBS' users and themselves. The suit accuses Leis and other law enforcement officials of violating the First Amendment, the Fourth Amendment, several provisions of the federal Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986 and Ohio common law privacy rights. It seeks actual damages or statutory damages — a minimum of **$11,000 *per user*** — and punitive damages on behalf of the seven plaintiffs and the entire class of users. Plus legal expenses, of course.

CCC BBS is not an underground hackers' haven, but a mainstream example of the *real* America Online. The class action suit's lead plaintiff is Steve Guest, a 36 year-old computer system analyst who runs his own business, in large part using the seized BBS. Other plaintiffs include Denise and Ben Kelley, grandparents of seven; Nelda Sturgill, a registered nurse who used the BBS to keep up with medical news and swap recipes; and Randy Bowling, who suffers from a speech impediment caused by a head injury, and who used the BBS as his primary way to communicate and study computer science.

The CCC BBS was a well-established and diversified online community. Its subscribers had access to several thousand local and Internet conferences, chat forums and file areas. To gain access to the lone adults-only conference on the system, a subscriber had to present proof of age to the sysop, Bob Emerson, in person — no mail-in or voice verification. Emerson would then adjust the subscriber's access privileges to include the adult area. Until the subscriber's access privileges were upgraded, the adult area did not even appear as an option on the subscriber's screen. It isn't even mentioned anywhere on the BBS. Only callers who asked — repeatedly — for adult files were advised that they were available.

David Hakala first appeared in *Boardwatch* in February, 1989. From May of 1991 until he assumed the position of Editor at Fault at *BW* in April, 1995, David wrote for a number of trade and mainstream journals, co-authored the book *Hot Links* with Mark Eppley, CEO of Traveling Software, and penned his own book, *Modems Made Easy*, which entered its second edition in March, 1995. In his spare time, David enjoys science fiction, billiards, country-western music and catching crayfish with his son, Tony Eric. David can be reached at `mailto:david.hakala@boardwatch.com` or at **(303)973-6038**.

The plaintiffs' claim states that "Many, if not most, of the CCC subscribers had no idea that an adult file area even existed." It further claims that adult materials accounted for less than 3% of all material on the BBS and that less than 3% of its subscribers had access to the adult area.

The law does not accept having "just a little bit" of porn online as a defense; indeed, this suit has nothing to do with the "crime" with which the Task Force may be charging Emerson, et. al. The plaintiffs' point is that the overwhelming majority of the CCC BBS' subscribers had nothing whatever to do with the subject of the search warrant, yet they were significantly and unnecessarily harmed by the police seizure of their virtual community. Their legitimate personal and business activities with each other were disrupted. Their private electronic communications were seized and probably scrutinized by law enforcement agents. Their subscriber records containing personal data were seized by the same agents and have likely been perused by said agents. All of these police actions were taken without cause or legal authority, according to the plaintiffs.

The plaintiffs claim that Municipal Court Judge James A. Shriver issued a search warrant for the premises in which the CCC BBS system was housed, but did not authorize the seizure of the computer system. The target named in the application for the search warrant consisted of a list of 45 digital files and their descriptions. Those files, claim the plaintiffs, were all the Task Force was authorized to seize. The Task Force far exceeded the authority it requested and which was given by the court, by seizing the BBS and the private messages and records of its subscribers. It's as if they told the judge, "We want to fingerprint a guy," then chopped off his whole family's hands to hold as evidence.

The plaintiffs also claim that the Task Force *already had* copies of the image files for which they obtained a search warrant, having downloaded the files from the BBS. The files were not described on the BBS; the Task Force members had to download and view them in order to write the descriptions cited in the application for a search warrant.

CCC BBS plaintiff users (clockwise from upper left): Steve Guest, Nelda Sturgill, Debbie Cummings, Randy Bowling, Dick Kramer, Denise and Ben Kelley

STEVE JACKSON'S LAWYER WEIGHS IN

Texas lawyer Peter D. Kennedy, who represented Steve Jackson Games when that company sued the U. S. Secret Service for illegally seizing its BBS in a 1990 raid, joined Cincinnati civil rights lawyer Scott T. Green in representing the CCC plaintiffs. Kennedy notes, "It is a fundamental principle of law that... the government must limit its searches and seizures to things related to the crime under investigation. Here, the Task Force took everything, including thousands of innocent persons' private mail and public notices."

"The Task Force used a drift net to troll for a tiny amount of supposed 'computer porn,'" said Greenwood. "In the process, they netted an enormous amount of entirely irrelevant material, and shut down a consitutionally-protected forum for speech and association." It seems that dolphins' rights to escape tuna nets are more sacred than the rights of BBS users to stay out of police dragnets.

Greenwood added, "Whether the sheriff and the computer 'net police' like it or not, the Bill of Rights is not optional just because they don't like it or understand it. Shutting down a computer system and seizing people's private communications makes a mockery of the First Amendment."

WHY DID THE SHERIFF RAID CCC BBS?

According to Greenwood, Cincinnati has a notoriously busy anti-porn population, led by Charles Keating, a native of the city. Keating founded the Citizens for Decent Literature group, which has mutated into the Citizens for Community Values national organization for the overly-concerned. These folks run around the country shutting down art museums, picketing gay book stores and generally minding everyone else's business. Keating has a mailing list of 17,000 to 20,000 Cincinnati smut-sniffers, and they recently declared a "cyber-porn" witch hunt in their home town.

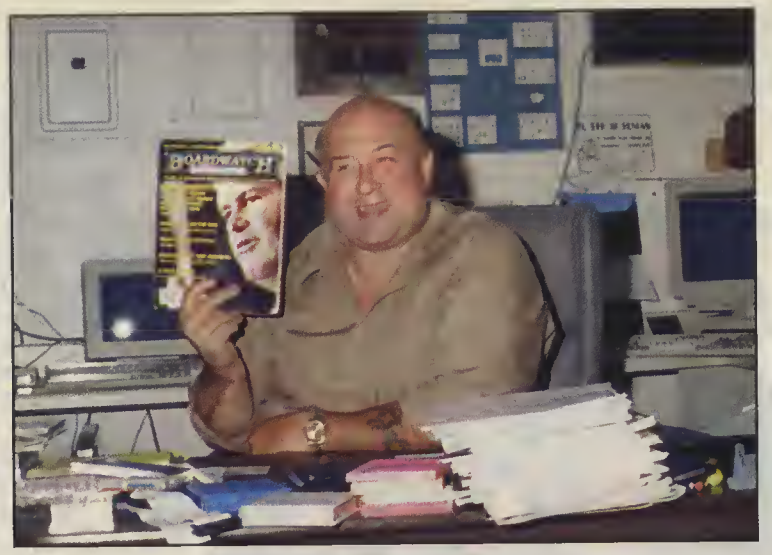
Sheriff Leis has a 20 year-old "smut grudge," according to Greenwood, and instantly jumped on the Keating bandwagon. Greenwood believes that the CCC BBS was seized "to send a message — that 'we (the police) can shut down any online system, anytime,'" for any reason or none.

Emerson, who has owned a number of video stores in Cincinnati for many years, says he's had seven previous encounters with Keating's local concerned citizens. Like most other video stores, his include sections devoted to adult entertainment. The Keating gang has filed complaints which resulted in criminal actions against Emersons' video business seven times — and Emerson has been vindicated every time. Emerson says Leis, who was DA is a neighboring county during the time, offered "special prosecutors" to Emerson's county court each time Emerson came to trial; Leis' offers were declined.

CCC BBS BACK ONLINE

But the Sheriff of Nettingham (sic) has a lot to learn about sysops. A "shut down" (more often of a technical nature) is something most of them deal with every other day, with great alacrity.

Emerson is 48 years old, with two sons and three grandchildren. He's been married to Vicky for nearly 30 years. When I asked about Vicky's reaction to



Bob Emerson, CCC BBS sysop

the raid, Emerson said, "I asked her, 'What am I gonna do?' and she shot back, 'I *know* what you're gonna do — you're gonna scrape up the money somehow and get the thing back online!'"

The CCC BBS was seized on a Friday. Emerson managed to scrape up **$17,000** for replacement gear, and with the help of four volunteers had the board back online by Sunday afternoon. He's spent over **$23,000** rebuilding at this writing and still has a long way to go. But his subscribers are helping out; many are paying again for the subscriptions that were interrupted by the cops.

THE SYSOP'S LEGAL CASES

Emerson is now charged with eight counts of "pandering obscenity," one count of possession of obscene materials and one count of "unauthorized use" of unspecified software.

In response, Emerson has filed a suit in U. S. District Court charging Leis, et. al., "unlawfully and unconstitutionally seized computer equipment, files, and communications in furtherance of a campaign to impose a prior restraint on the computer transmission of nonobscene adult oriented forms of expression presumptively protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution." He places the value of the seized equipment and software at **$45,000**, and estimates his lost subscription revenues at **$28,000** per month. The suit claims that the Task Force's actions are part of a conspiracy and pattern of behavior designed to repress protected, nonobscene forms of expression, and seek a preliminary and permanent injunction restraining the parties named in the suit from pursuing any policies or actions which would impose such prior restraint upon Emerson's lawful activities. Emerson also seeks compensatory damages of **$250,000**, return of all seized materials, liquidated damages and legal expenses.

Log on to the Cincinnati Computer Connection BBS at **(513)752-1055** to see what all the fuss is about. Better yet, send these courageous folks all the support and encouragement you can spare. It's going to be a tough, long battle — on many more fronts than this one. We're delighted that BBS users are finally joining it.

HOW TO HELP CCC BBS & ITS SUBSCRIBERS

Send sysop Bob Emerson some encouraging words:
mailto:bob.emerson@cccbbs.cincinnati.oh.us

Better still, send a contribution to Emerson's legal defense fund:

C.C.C. BBS Defense Fund
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A legal defense fund has been set up to defray the costs of the CCC BBS class action suit. Send contributions to

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Star Bank - Cincinnati
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Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
(513)632-2041

The attorneys for the plaintiffs welcome comments and are willing to discuss the case's status. Here is their contact information:

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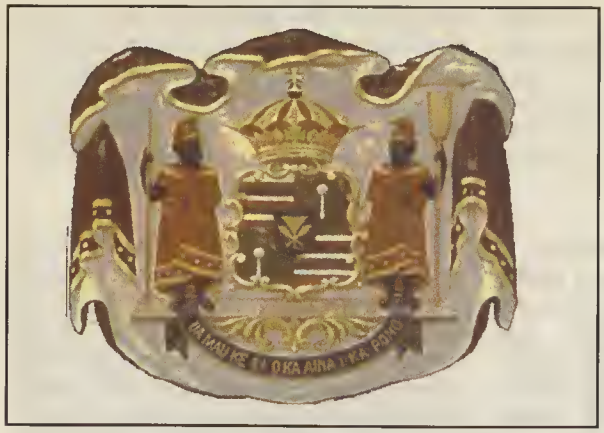
THIS MONTH'S LISTKEEPER

`ONIPA`A: HAWAI'IAN SOVEREIGNTY BBS

This month's list arrived in the usual way — out of the clear blue sky. Larry Kwiatkowski, operator of the ***`Onipa`a BBS*** at **(808)947-9421** on Oahu, Hawai'i, called to advise me that our Hawai'ian Listkeeper entry needed updating. Much obliged, I went on to ask Larry a few questions about his BBS, starting with, "What does *`Onipa`a* (O-nee-PAH-ah) mean?" His answer, "Dig in. Persevere," started me on an intriguing journey through Hawai'ian history, the tribulations of Westernized indigenous populations, and back to cyberspace — where we "natives" face a struggle remarkably similar to that of the Hawai'ians.

The United States of America consists of more than just fifty States. In addition to "Territories" such as the Phillipine Islands, the U. S. A. includes some 550 "Native Nations" which enjoy considerable self-governing powers. Most people — particularly big-money bingo fans — are aware that American Indian reservations are not subject to exactly the same federal and state laws governing other geographic precincts. Under policies established during the Nixon administration, the U.S.: 1)



Coat of Arms of the Hawai'an Nation

rejects government wardship over natives; 2) supports federal recognition of the right of native nations to be self-governing; 3) allows native people to control their own lands, revenues, and natural resources; and 4) provides assistance for the creation of economic self-sufficiency. Native courts, rather than state or federal courts, deal with many civil disputes, and native governing councils in many ways treat with state and federal government agencies as if they were representatives of separate, sovereign nations. This policy of encouraging self-determination among native peoples helps to preserve native cultures, property rights and economic independence. Of course, the policy may also be a bunch of white dudes' guilty reaction to centuries of exploitation, cruelty and misappropriation of resources with respect to indigenous populations.

However, one of the most blatant and recent examples of a nation "assimilated" into the United States against its will does not enjoy the qualified benefits of Nixon's policy. Hawai'i first established ongoing relationships with Westerners in 1778, when Captain James Cook landed at Waimea, Kaua`i. The relationship has been confused ever since.

The United States formally recognized Hawai'i's independence in 1826, after several decades of meddling in its local politics, economics, social customs and religious values. Great Britain, in 1843, first seized Hawai'i for its own, then restored the kingdom and joined France in acknowledging Hawai'i's independence. On July 7, 1887, an all-white Hawai'ian League imposed what is called the "Bayonet Constitution" on the kingdom, stripping the king of his powers and appropriating land rights. On January 17, 1893, a group of businessmen supported by U. S. Marines deposed Hawai'i's queen and imposed a provisional government. Later that year, President Grover Cleveland sent a message to Congress calling for the queen's restoration as sovereign. President McKinley annexed Hawai'i in 1898, and in 1900 Hawai'i became a U. S. territory in spite of its natives' protests. Statehood was "granted" to Hawai'i in 1959 after a plebiscite vote which did not offer the option of independence, as required by international law.

On November 23, 1993, President Bill Clinton signed United States Public Law 103-150, popularly known among Hawai'ians as the "Apology Resolution." Among other admissions of guilt, it acknowledges that "the indigenous Hawai'ian people never directly relinquished their claims to their inherent sovereignty as a people or over their national lands to the United States, either through their monarchy or through a plebiscite or referendum." The resolution explicitly apologizes to the "Native Hawai'ian people" (formally known as the Kanaka Maoli) and makes vague mutterings about "reconciliation."

Today, many Hawai'ians are still fighting for recognition of the sovereignty they never relinquished. A group of 250 Hawai'ian natives formed *Ka Lahui Hawai'i* — The Sovereign Nation of Hawai'i — in 1987 for the purpose of "regaining their native lands and re-establishing Hawai'ians as a self-governing people," according to the group's Education Department. They've drafted a Constitution, elected representatives who have amended the Constitution three times, conducted over 300 sovereignty education workshops and 14 legislative sessions, ratified treaties with other native nations, sent diplomatic liasons to the U. N., and in short conducted themselves as a sovereign government — insofar as one can which lacks law enforcement and taxation powers.

Pu`uhonua Kanahele, Hawai'an Nation's Chief of State

Rodney Dangerfield gets more respect than an unrecognized nation. The elected Head of State for the Independent Nation of Hawai'i, Pu`uhonua Kanahele, was recently jailed on charges of harboring a tax protestor back in 1990. Most unusually for this sort of alleged offense, Kanahele has been denied bail. His proponents and political rights groups such as the Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project characterize Kanahele as a political prisoner.

At issue are the economic and cultural assets of the Kanaka Maoli: management of lands presently held in trust by the federal and state government, sacred sites, education curricula for native children, religious and legal traditions. It is

a battle for the right of a people to be themselves in the midst of a homogenized United States.

Larry Kwiatkowski returned to his native land and its political turmoil in 1990. A flight attendant for Northwest Airlines, Larry has also been a sysop since 1979. He maintained a list of BBSs in western Washington State from 1988 to 1990, then moved back to the island of Oahu with his BBS, the Imagination Station. The one-line Searchlight 4.5a system continued its "absolute nonsense" theme for about six months, until Larry found that Hawai'ians were much more interested in the sovereignty issue. The Imagination Station became the *`Onipa`a BBS* in early 1991. The BBS' name evokes the tenacity of the natives who are seeking acknowledgement of their sovereignty, as well as the long, slow struggle they still face.

Often the battle is acrimonious; natives conflict with other natives as well as with "mainlanders." Larry says several anonymous callers have flamed him on his own board for providing the only online forum in which Hawai'ian sovereignty and Native American issues are freely and actively discussed. He says unknown callers left messages threatening to "burn down" his BBS — and Larry's home, of course. Nothing has come of the threats yet, but they indicate just how emotional the issue of Hawai'ian sovereignty is.

The Nation of Hawai'i Homepage at **http://www.aloha.net/nation/** makes a powerful presentation of the case for sovereignty. Historical documents, contemporary news and legislative reports, policy statements and legal documentation, photos and links to other Hawai'ian-independence sites inundate the reader with persuasion.

`Onipa`a provides a vital dialup link to a wealth of online native sovereignty resources and support groups, by bringing to Oahu the ***NativeNet*** echomail network. NativeNet includes 68 BBSs; discussions revolve around native people's rights, experiences with "the establishment" and efforts to become self-governing.

A NativeWeb World Wide Web site at **http://ukanaix.cc.ukans.edu/~marc/** provides an even broader view of indigenous cultures. Native Americans, including the Inuit and Hawai'ians, dominate the site. But Australian aborigines, the Sami people of Scandanavia (a. k. a. Lapps) the Nenets and Khanty of western Siberia, and other indigenous populations also find representation in NativeWeb.

The `Onipa`a BBS, small and distant as it is, has earned a permanent place in my dialing directory's first screen. I see in the struggle of native people worldwide a reflection of the struggle now taking place in cyberspace. BBS operators first "settled" the online frontier. Now the territory is being claimed by a number of large, powerful interests who would like nothing better than to push the natives off onto squalid little reservations — nothing, that is, except to have the "Native Problem" permanently eliminated. We cyber-natives need to organize ourselves and world opinion to preserve our independence. We need to learn how to use the system to protect ourselves from it. The natives of Hawai'i, Alaska, Illinois, Australia, Siberia and other places have much to teach us, beginning with Larry's advice to *`onipa`a*. ◆

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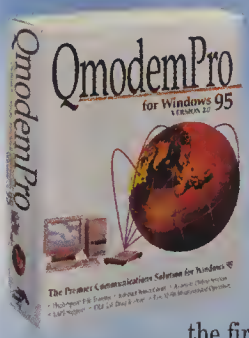

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* RSA Data Security, Inc. MD5 Message-Digest Algorithm

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NATIVENET BBS LIST

68 NATIVENET BOARDS

NodeList Published By:
Ronald McGill, (514)656-1533 modem
Fidonet 1:167/512 NativeNet 90:90/3

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Int Computer ICUG	Washington DC	1-202-955-2259
The Fifth Age	Oakville CT	1-203-274-2747
North Western USA	Olympia WA	1-206-786-9629
Native People WA	Olympia WA	1-206-786-9629
Smoke Signal	Garland Tx	1-214-276-0321
Wolf's Head BBS	Garfield Heights OH	1-216-475-4808
Northern Ohio Link	Corland OH	1-216-637-6647
Susie's CraftRoom	Greenbelt MD	1-301-345-8932
ParaNet(sm) Information Service	Arvada CO	1-303-429-2713
Rocky Mountain Rendezvous	Cheyenne WY	1-307-638-8506
Magic	Rockwood MI	1-313-379-9276
Edge of Sanity	Dearborn MI	1-313-584-1253
The Outer Limits	Woodhaven MI	1-313-692-4174
The Outer Limits	Woodhaven MI	1-313-692-4174
The Third Moon of Neptune	detroit mi	1-313-843-1837
The Thieves World	Middletown RI	1-401-841-0788
AB NET	Calgary AB	1-403-286-7545
NORTH AB AK BC ID NWT SK YK	Whitehorse YK	1-403-633-2124
The Geomatics BBS	Whitehorse YK	1-403-633-2124
Yukon Mail System	Whitehorse YK	1-403-668-6147
THE MOHAWK BBS	Scarborough ON	1-416-438-8998
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The Cherokee Nation	Lowell Ma	1-508-452-2082
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The Lord's Way	Las Vegas NV	1-702-898-5966
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Clear Water BBS	Eau Claire WI	1-715-832-1217
Freedom/NCC-1701 BBS	Altoona WI	1-715-839-9842
Jerry's BBS	Matamoras Pa	1-717-491-5113
Port Coco BBS	Portsmouth VA	1-804-393-6614

The Skeleton Closet BBS	Virginia Beach VA	1-804-473-2217
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1995 John C. Dvorak Awards

Each year at ONE BBSCON, the brightest stars in the online universe are honored at a banquet ceremony hosted by John C. Dvorak and generous corporate sponsors. The winners are selected for their contributions to the online community, without regard to commercial success. The John C. Dvorak Award for Excellence in PC Telecommunications is akin to the Nobel Prize, the highest honor that a grateful worldwide community can bestow upon its most cherished members.

This year's ceremony was attended by some 600 people. Several awards went to commercial enterprises which have broken new ground in online technologies or set standards of excellence and leadership in their respective disciplines. But the winners also included altruistic visionaries like Peter Tattam, who left the crowd misty-eyed with his earnest account of Trumpet Winsock's development and Tattam's dream for a peaceful, unified global community. Jim Warren, our ever-vigilant government watchdog, received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his incessant and effective efforts to open up government to online access and keep the regulators off our collective backs. The folks at Connectsoft earned our gratitude by freely giving the world their estimable E-Mail Connection Internet Edition mail program (see the review in our August, 1995 issue). The irreverent, funloving founders of the Yahoo! Net database engine were honored for their invaluable contribution to mapping the Information Highway.

The sponsors of the awards contributed substantial amounts of services, prizes and cash to honor the winners. Hayes Microcomputer Products was the primary sponsor of this year's ceremony. Over 50 other sponsors from every conceivable segment of the online industry — computers, modems, software, publishing, audio equipment, Internet access and others — pitched in with a will to make this year's Dvorak Awards a grand celebration of our best and brightest. You can find all of the sponsors contact information and links to their homepages at **http://www.InContext.ca/dvorak/** — a site sponsored by InContext Corp.

Here, then, is the full description of the award winners and this year's sponsors.

WINNERS OF THE 1995 JOHN C. DVORAK AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN PC TELECOMMUNICATIONS

BEST ONLINE TOPICAL INDEX

Yahoo!

Authors: Jerry Yang and David Filo

The Yahoo! guide to the Internet is a fully hyper-linked, hierarchical classification system for the net. The service currently lists over 55,000 sites and receives around 3 million accesses daily from 250,000 users. Users can search for key words within the Yahoo! database or use the hierarchy to surf to some unknown destination. Jerry and David started Yahoo in April, 1994 as Pre-Doctoral students in Electrical Engineering at Stanford University. Their idea was to keep track of interesting sites, for their own personal use. Word about Yahoo spread quickly, as it often does with good services on the net. Traffic doubled each month through the whole first year. Yang and Filo took a leave from Stanford, raised capital and now devote their full time to Yahoo! In the best spirit of the Internet, Jerry and David have pledged to keep their whimsical and irreverent service free for all users on the Net.

Yahoo! Corporation
110 Pioneer Way Suite F
Mountain View, CA 94041
Jerry Yang: **(415)934-3235**
David Filo: **(415)934-3231**
Fax: **(415)934-3248**
http://www.yahoo.com

OUTSTANDING WINDOWS CLIENT / SERVER-BASED BBS SOFTWARE

Mindwire from Durand Communications Network Inc.

Authors: Duff, Tina Young, Robbin

MindWire is a Windows-based communications platform which lets anyone establish a powerful online service. Its client/server applications operate over a modem, network, or the Internet and can be customized to fit individual needs. It has all the traditional features of an online service, including E-Mail, File Library, Chat, and Messaging. What sets it apart is a development architecture that hooks seamlessly into the the World Wide Web, giving the independent online service provider powerful tools and immediate access to third party content developers. In one platform, MindWire accommodates the shift from DOS to Windows, from terminal/host to client/server, and modem dialup Internet access. For the first time in the BBS industry, MindWire lets people leverage the Internet and client/server technology.

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(800)999-7771 or **(805)961-8700**
http://www.durand.com
BBS: **(805)961-8710**

OUTSTANDING INTERNET E-MAIL CLIENT

E-Mail Connection version 2.5 Internet Edition, by Connectsoft

ConnectSoft has come a long way since the introduction of E-Mail Connection in 1993. The program's intuitive graphical interface enables Windows users to connect with services such as MCI Mail, Compuserve and PRODIGY as well as most LANs to send and receive e-mail. The next release version which will ship this fall will include an America Online client, Internet client, and direct Fax support. ConnectSoft has released E-Mail Connection version 2.5 Internet Edition for Windows as freeware. The software works on all TCP/IP networks on a Windows-based PC with a Winsock compliant TCP/IP stack. It uses SMTP for sending mail, POP3 for receiving mail, and supports MIME and Uuencoding for attaching files to messages.

ConnectSoft, Inc.
11130 Northeast 33rd Place, Suite 250
Bellevue, WA 98004-1448
(800)234-9497 or **(206)827-6467**
`ftp://emc.connectsoft.com/pub/emc25/emcsetup.exe`

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Prodigy has revamped its image and positioned itself as a leading fully "Internet connected" multimedia commercial online information service. Its first major overhaul yielded a much faster service and an entirely new bulletin board (forum) architecture. Other improvements included online chat, new and improved E-Mail services, and the first built-in World Wide Web browser to be offered by a major commercial online service. Prodigy users have downloaded more than one million copies of the Web Browser. It won the Innovation Award for 1994 from the Interactive Services Association. More than 10,000 Prodigy members have created personal pages in the first month this service was available.

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OUTSTANDING WEB-BASED MAGAZINE

Urban Desires

Urban Desires is a general interest interactive magazine published exclusively on the World Wide Web, first produced in December, 1994. The editorial focus is on cultural topics rather than technical ones. Sections of the magazine include: The Written Word, Art, Tech-Toys, Sex, Music, Performance, Food, Style, and Travel. The popularity of Urban Desires indicates a hunger for cultural content on the net. With no print counterpart, or ancillary advertising, the magazine currently receives 150,000 hits per day and that number is climbing.

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eSoft's Internet Protocol Adapter (IPAD) is a plug-and-play appliance which provides the core of required functionality to establish an Internet site (Router, Domain Name Service, FTP, E-Mail, and dial-up SLIP/PPP access) in a single, easy to install and configure package. By removing most of the difficulty normally associated with establishing an Internet connection, the IPAD makes such connections realistic for a much wider, non-technical audience. It can also be used with a Web server, Mindwire server, or any other Internet server software to provide a complete stand-alone Internet presence. A single IPAD can provide up to 32 lines of dial-up SLIP/PPP through either analog modems or ISDN adapters. Multiple IPADs can be easily clustered to allow larger dial-in systems, or to provide large volume E-Mail or FTP hubs. The flexibility of the IPAD's interface configuration allows connecting leased lines, ISDN, Ethernet or Token Ring access and dial-up lines in nearly any combination.

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OUTSTANDING ISDN ROUTER

Ascend Pipeline 50, by Ascend Communications, Inc.

Ascend Communications, Inc. develops, manufactures, sells, and supports a broad range of high-speed digital wide area network access products. The Ascend Pipeline 50 allows organizations to enhance and extend the reach of a corporate enterprise network for remote LAN access, Internet access and telecommuting applications. Slightly larger than a video cassette tape, the Ascend Pipeline 50 provides an Ethernet interface and an ISDN BRI S/T interface, or an ISDN BRI U interface with an internal NT1. It includes standards-based bridging and IP/IPX routing, ISDN dial-on-demand, inverse multiplexing of the two ISDN B channels, 4:1 data compression, SNMP remote management, extensive password, challenge, and token-based security features.

Ascend Communications, Inc.
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(800)621-9578 or **(510)769-6001**
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PCBoard for OS/2, by Clark Development Company, Inc.

PCBoard for OS/2 is the industry's first full-featured BBS software for OS/2. It includes powerful features such as Internet Mail & USENET News, Fido Mailer & Tosser, QWK Mail, Credit Accounting, the PCBoard Programming Language, and all of the other features available with PCBoard for DOS plus several features unique to the OS/2 version such as the PCBoard Control Panel. The new "Run on Connect" feature allows the Control Panel to create additional BBS nodes as necessary to handle high numbers of simultaneous callers. It also includes a Watchdog capability that detects any hung nodes, even when in an external file transfer protocol or a DOOR, and terminates that session then restarts the node automatically. PCBoard for OS/2 is a 32-bit, multi-threaded, native OS/2 program. As such, it takes advantage of all the benefits that OS/2 has to offer. The end result is a BBS that runs more nodes, faster, and with less memory than previously possible.

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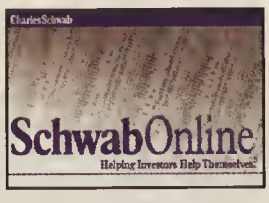
BEST ONLINE FINANCIAL SERVICE/SOFTWARE

Streetsmart, by Charles Schwab

StreetSmart is the exclusive portfolio management software and online service from discount brokerage house, Charles Schwab. It supports online trading of stocks, mutual funds, options and listed corporate bonds. Once online, users can check their brokerage accounts and get the latest news and research from Standard & Poor's, Dow Jones, Reuters, Morningstar, and others. StreetSmart goes beyond the simple portfolio managers of commercial online services by offering powerful tools to monitor and analyze investments, including real-time quotes and sophisticated graphic functions. Users receive a 10% discount on trades done with the software and there is no charge for online access.



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Software Creations Web BBS
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BEST WEB BBS

Software Creations BBS/Website, by Linton Enterprises
Software Creations is best known for games and entertainment, and provides the HOME BBS system for some of the world's best shareware developers. The Software Creations BBS offers more developers, graphics artists, and program designers than just about any other system in the world. It has been voted as the world's most popular BBS since 1993 by readers of ***Boardwatch Magazine***. This year SWC announced another industry first with its WEB BBS technology, the first fully functional BBS system on the Internet at **http://www.swcbbs.com**

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Sun Microsystems, Inc.
2550 Garcia Avenue
Mountain View, CA 94043-1100
(800)821-4643 or **(415)960-1300**
http://java.sun.com

OUTSTANDING TCP/IP WINSOCK CLIENT/SOCKET

Trumpet Winsock,
by Peter R. Tattam, Trumpet Software International Pty-Ltd.

Trumpet Winsock is a core Internet tool that was one of the first shareware Winsock implementations available. Its modest **$25** registration price and its convenient shareware distribution have contributed to the much needed price reductions in costly competing commercial offerings. The program consists of two tightly connected components: a Winsock 1.1-compatible Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) stack and another program that manages the TCP/IP stack and connecccts to dial-in IP service providers. The company's other offerings include Trumpet Newsreader for DOS, Trumpet Newsreader for Windows and Slipper (a TSR packet driver for SLIP connections that includes VJ compression), also written by Tattam.

Trumpet Software Intl. Pty Ltd.
GPO Box 1649
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Australia
+61 02 450220 International
002 450220 Australia
http://www.trumpet.com.au
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Gina Blaber (O'Reilly and Associates)
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Bob Denny
Web Developer & Evangelist
221 South Oak Knoll Avenue,
Suite #207
Pasadena, CA 91101

Gina Blaber
Director, Software Products Group
O'Reilly and Associates
103A Morris Street
Sebastopol, CA 95472
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`http://www.ora.com`

Jay C. Weber
Director, Web Products
Enterprise Integration Technologies Corporation (EIT)
800 El Camino Real
Menlo Park, CA 94025
(415)617-8000

MAN OF THE YEAR

Alan Meckler, CEO, Mecklermedia
Alan Meckler, 49, is the cyberspace entrepreneur behind Mecklermedia. He has been turning ideas into products for 20 years. Alan has become one of the field's great success stories without ever losing his sense of responsibility to the computing world from which that success sprang. He has never lost contact with the "rest of us." For the degree to which everyone, not just a priestly few, can get access to the interconnected world of computing, we all are indebted to his efforts. According to a recent article in ***Forbes***, Alan Meckler has started over two dozen publications. He also sponsors a number of trade shows worldwide. His Mecklerweb was one of the first commercial web sites and his ***Internet World*** magazine was the first publication devoted to the Internet.

Alan Meckler, CEO
Mecklermedia
20 Ketchum Street
Westport, CT 06880
(800)MECKLER or **(203)226-6967**
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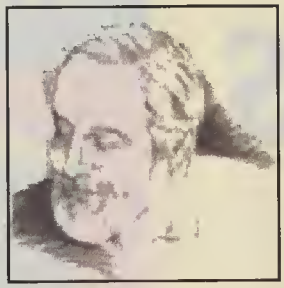

This year's recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award has been a longtime mover in the world of personal computing. Jim Warren founded the Computers, Freedom & Privacy Conferences, ***InfoWorld*** Magazine, and the historic West Coast Computer Faire. He was also the founding host for the PBS Computer Chronicles television series and the founding editor of ***Dr. Dobbs Journal***. He has been a board member of Autodesk and is a popular columnist for ***MicroTimes***, ***Government Technology***, and ***Boardwatch Magazine***. Jim also maintains a free electronic newsletter, GovAccess, published on an irregular but frequent basis. In recognition of his efforts, Jim recently received the Hugh M. Hefner First Amendment Award for his online advocacy work. He also received the Electronic Frontier Foundation's Pioneer Award, the first year it was given. Jim has made it an unpaid career to mobilize the online community over important issues. He advocates using the Internet for quick, direct contact with those in power. Toward this end, he formed the first Conference on Computers, Freedom and Privacy. He regularly sounds the alarm about possible government abuses on the information superhighway — and he has quite a following. In his columns, Jim combs through reports to expose what he sees as dangerous or wrongheaded legislation. Our society — and the Net in particular — needs the occasional shot of sanity that Jim continues to provide as a civil liberties watchdog and open government advocate.

Jim Warren
345 Swett Road
Woodside, CA 94062
(415)851-7075
`mailto:jwarren@well.com`

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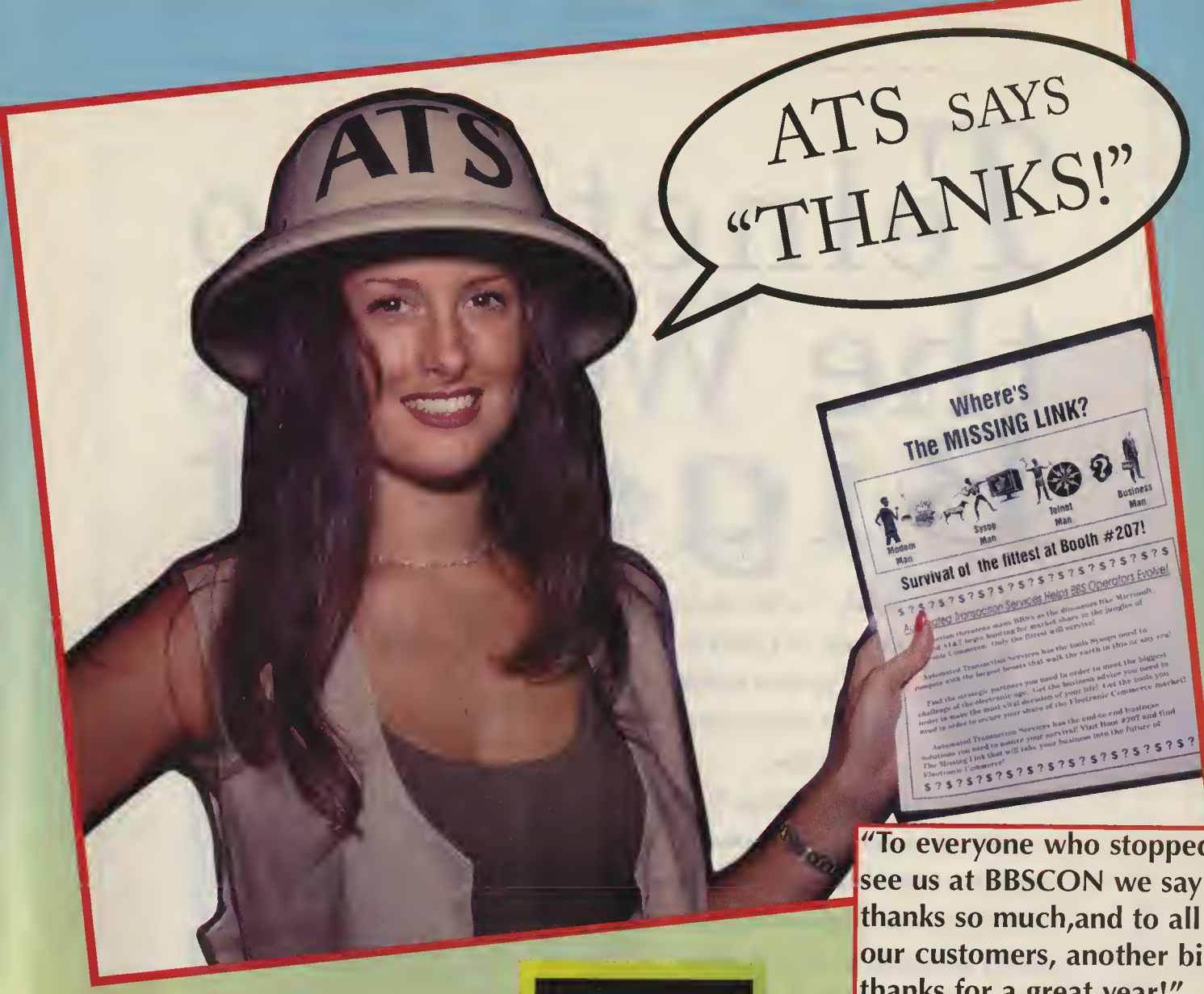

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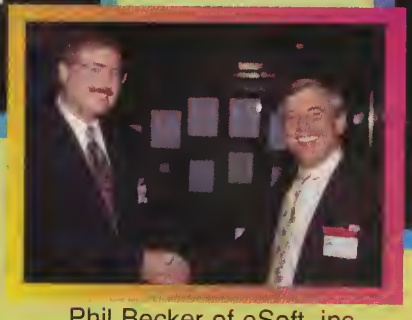

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GADGETS & GIZMOLOGY

by Gary W. Funk, Gizmologist

Using The ADTRAN ISU 128 For 512Kbps ISDN

I feel a need, the need for speed. And I need an ISDN line.

Most people have heard of ISDN, but few understand what it is and why we need it. What it is, is digital, and why we need it, is bandwidth. With thousands of new users connecting to the Internet daily, and hundreds of new Telnet, Ftp, and Web sites being added each day, today's analog modems just can't handle the amount of information available. The 28.8Kbps modem has been with us for the last two years, and it is doubtful we will see any new significant increase in analog modem speeds.

ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Networks) is designed for a digital telephone network to carry voice and data with a single digital interface. This means little to no noise and high speeds.

ISDN was designed around a 64Kbps channel, a rate derived from the sampling rate of analog lines, which is 8000 samples per second with 8 bits per sample (8000 x 8 = 64,000) for the telephone company's Integrated Digital Network (IDN). ISDN is a combination of 64Kbps channels which are called B channels and slower 16Kbps channels called D channels. The names of these channels seem to come from the Greek Alphabet. Analog channels are called A channels. So the next channel, which is digital or Binary (sometimes also called Bearer) is called the B Channel, and the third, the Delta or D Channel.

ISDN Basic Rate Interface (BRI) has been designed to handle the maximum throughput of the current telephone wiring structure. Since the current copper wiring to the home can reasonably handle about 160Kbps, ISDN BRI is standardized at two B channels and one D channel with 16Kbps left to act as guardband and overhead. ISDN BRI, also commonly called 2B+D, works on telephone lines currently installed in your house. One ISDN line can simultaneously handle a digital telephone and a digital modem that can do at least 57.6Kbps (twice the speed of a 28.8 modem). What you end up with is a digital voice line and a data line which is the same speed as a 56Kbps leased line, both for well below the cost of a leased line. What more could you want?
If ISDN BRI is two 64Kbps channels, how about one 128Kbps channel? After all, isn't that what we want? More bandwidth, faster throughput. The telcos said it couldn't be done. But then, they always say it can't be done when they don't want to do something.

As it always happens, where there's a will, there's a way. Spurred on by the videoconferencing industry, companies like ADTRAN and Ascend developed a way to combine the two B channels and make it look like one Big B channel. This is called inverse multiplexing. There are three common methods for combining several B channels.

BONDING

The most common method is called BONDING or Bandwidth ON Demand INteroperability Group and is implemented by most ISDN adapter vendors. Since each 64Kbps channel of an inverse multiplexed connection is an independent call, there has to be a way to place data on each channel and, at the other end, reassemble that data in the correct order. This seems simple: number the packets as they go out and make sure the packets are reassembled in numeric order. But life is not that simple. Each call goes through the telephone switching network, and there is no way to insure that all the calls will be routed the same way. A call from Denver to Chicago may have one channel direct, another channel routed through St Louis, another through Los Angeles, and some may even end up routed through a satellite link (which can have a delay of up to 1/2 second). And let's not forget the delays in the switching equipment.

Suppose we have eight channels being delivered via eight different paths, with eight different arrival times. The inverse multiplexer must now compensate for each delay by buffering the data from each channel until the data packets from all eight channels arrive. At this time, the packets are reassembled and the data stream is properly reconstructed. The end-to-end delay is the time of the channel with the longest transit time.

Since BONDING is a vendor-developed specification, it is not yet a true standard. The specification has been submitted to the Telecommunications Industries Association committee, which in turn has submitted it to the ITU-TSS (formerly CCITT) and to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). So there is hope that BONDING will be come a real standard.

ISU 512 KBPS ISDN INVERSE MULTIPLEXER

There were several sessions on ISDN at this year's ONE BBSCON and there were several ISDN lines available for use during the show. There was also a T1 line at the show for IP connections to be used in the classrooms and by several of the exhibitors. Some of the ISDN lines needed pre-configured adapters. And of course someone asks, "What happens if the

T1 goes down?" Good question.The answer is: use ISDN as backup.

The ISDN adapters on the pre-configured lines were ADTRAN ISU 128's. They are manufactured by ADTRAN, Inc, a leading supplier of DDS and ISDN products to all Regional Bell Operating Companies (RBOCs). With over a million circuits operating nationwide, ADTRAN has rapidly become a major provider of ISDN equipment to customers as well as other manufactures worldwide.

A quick call to ADTRAN, Inc., gets the answer I want, and two days later two boxes are delivered. Inside each box is an ISU 512, which can do up to 512Kbps over ISDN with 4 ISDN BRI lines installed. This is eight 64Kbps channels (8x64K = 512K).

Setting up and configuring the ISU 512 is easier and quicker than a USR V.34 modem. And we all know how to set up a USR modem. You take it out of the box, plug it in, turn it on, and type ATZ.

To set up the ISU 512, you plug in AC power and turn on the unit. The configuration is done using the front panel keypad or a VT 100 menu system. You do need some information from the telephone company, such as the Switch Type and Terminal Identification. The switch type will be AT&T 5ESS, National ISDN1, NEC, or DMS-100. If you're unlucky and end up on a DMS-100 (some DMS-100 switches can only do one B channel) move to an area with a different central office switch. The Terminal Identification consists of the LDN (Local Directory Number) and SPID (Service Profile IDentifier). The LDN is a seven-digit local phone number. The SPID is a sequence of numbers and usually looks similar to the LDN. Each BRI will have two LDNs, one for each channel. Each BRI may have up to two SPIDs. When ordering ISDN, I have found it best to order two SPIDs as some applications may require two.

Once the Switch Type and Terminal Identification have been entered, the Max Bit Rate must be set. In this case, we want 64K channels and we will be using four BRI lines, so we select 8x64K. Next we chose the connector type. This unit will connect to a router so we select V.35 for the connector type. Since this unit will answer the call, we are done. If this unit were to make the call, we would set DTR options to automatically dial the other end and make the connection.

Once the unit is programmed, turn it off, plug in the four ISDN BRI lines and turn the power switch back on. The ISU 512 will go through its self-test and then the front panel LCD display will show the status of each BRI. A "READY" on all four lines indicates the ISU 512 can now accept a 512K link ISDN bonding call.

One end of the link is set up and waiting. The next step is to configure the other end. On site at Tampa, the second ISU 512 is set up in the phone room at the convention center. A note with the LDNs for each of the BRIs is hanging on the rack. A GTE installer is on site, and he knows the switch type. The unit is programmed with the switch, LDNs, SPIDs and Max Bit Rate. The unit is connected to the router.

The phone number to dial is entered through the front panel and presto, it tries to dial but can't.

A quick call to ADTRAN Tech Support. I tell them who I am and what I am doing. I'm told the tech I need to talk to is out to lunch and they are finding me the next best tech to talk to. Three minutes later, I am told they have located Lee and he will be with me in two more minutes. I finally get to talk to Lee. He asks some questions, I give him the answers. He tells me what buttons to push and I tell him what the unit said. Lee tells me to check my SPIDs. I tell him what they say and he asks where I got the numbers.

Well, I programmed the SPIDs the way US West told me to do the ones in Denver. Big mistake.

A short conference with the GTE installer and I see the error. A quick change of the SPIDs, tell the ISU 512 to dial, and presto, the unit reports BONDING 512K. It worked with the ADTRANs Test Center.

The next step is to disconnect and enter the number of our backup IP link. Within three seconds there was a "Connect" and "BONDING 512K." It's up and it works. In less than 20 minutes, the ISU 512 was installed and in full operation. We had a 512Kbps IP backup if we needed it.

The best thing about the ISU 512 is that it just sits there and works. The front panel consists of seven modem type LEDs, a two line by 16 character LCD display, and a numeric keypad for programming the unit. The back panel is where you will find the power switch along with the NT1 interfaces for plugging in up to four ISDN BRI lines. Also located there are the V.35, RS530 and RS366 ports along with a control port for connecting a VT 100 terminal or computer via null modem at 9600 bps.

The unit contains flash memory, allowing the software to be updated using the control port, much like today's V.34 modems. It also supports dedicated 2B1Q services for point-to-point connections such as limited-distance modem or leased line applications. And for those who want it, the ISU 512 is perfect for all kinds of videoconferencing.

At a list price of **$2595**, the ADTRAN ISU 512 is not for everyone. If you live in an area where ISDN lines are cheap and you need a 512Kbps link, this is a great way to get it. This item gets a big four stars for performance and ADTRAN gets four stars for tech support. I can't promise, but it looks like this item will certainly get the Gary Funk Product of the Year Award. ADTRAN, Inc.; 901 Explorer Blvd.; Huntsville, Al 35806-2807; **(205)971-8000** or **(800)326-3700** voice; **(205)971-8116** fax; **mailto:info@adtran.com**; **http://www.adtran.com** ◆

DVORAK ONLINE by John C. Dvorak

THE GRUDGE PAGE: A NEW PHENOMENON

If you harbor a grudge, you can be certain that if the grudge is strong enough, it will develop into a Web Page. A Grudge Page, actually. They are an interesting replacement for the old-fashioned poison pen letter. They have more interest than a simple flame buried in a message thread, never to be read again. People feel compelled to go view them. I believe that Grudge Pages will become a world-wide phenomenon and there will be little anyone can do about them.

Here's the page that lends credence to this thesis: **http://www.halcyon.com/redrose/joan.html**. It's called Redmond Rose — a reference to Tokyo Rose, I believe.

This woman, Joan Brewer, puts together a compelling public complaint against Bill Gates and how he, among other things, allegedly had her beat up in Washington, DC, after sending her on a bogus travel schedule. The rationale for Bill's alleged behavior is vague, but the pages are worth reading for entertainment value. Unfortunately, this kind of thing portends a gloomy future for public figures.

"Let's face it: everyone with a gripe is going to go online with it someday."

The ease with which you can publish on the Web is frightening. And this kind of thing also attracts a crowd (how many of you won't be tempted to check it out?). Now I have never met nor corresponded with this woman and have no clue as to how accurate her account of things is. And I'm not tight enough with Microsoft to know things such as whether or not a religious cult permeates the place (this is discussed in her pages, too). So what am I to think? I mean, it's possible, isn't it? If none of it is true, it sure makes for an interesting poison web page.

The Grudge page strikes close to home too. Curiously, the esteemed owner of *Boardwatch*, Jack Rickard, has some fellow harassing him and there is a simple Web page with little more on it than some anti-Rickard epithets. According to Rickard this fellow got thrown out of a ONE BBSCON and has had it in for Jack ever since. The staff is amused, for sure. I think Rickard could sue this guy, but is it worth it? And what would you do if someone hated you and put up a web page in the Barbados accusing you of things you didn't do? What would you do about it?

When I thought of this column idea I reckoned I'd wrap it up with a basic complaint as to how the proliferation of this kind of thing isn't really that good for society. But heck, maybe it *is* a good thing. Whatever the case, there is nothing that can be done about it and maybe it's time to set some standards.

Let's face it: everyone with a gripe is going to go online with it someday. If you are attacked you are either going to have to ignore the attack or devise a Grudge Page of your own. I personally don't think the petty complaints about your boss or ex-girlfriend will ever be as popular as complaints about rip-offs or bad products. The latter categories are where the Grudge Page will shine.

I recall an old New York cable access show run by the publisher of ***Screw Magazine***, Al Goldstein. He felt gypped by some local store and I believe started this show to air his own complaints. But anyone could come on and complain about anything. The formula was as follows: you'd come on the show and outline the problem you had with some company. Any problem was acceptable. Then, on camera, you'd give them (the offending corporation or store) the finger and yell "So F**k YOU!" and cite the company. It was rather amusing, at least for a while.

The disadvantage was that the cable access channel would show this at 2 in the morning and there was no way you could go back and see it again. With the Grudge Page you can go online anytime to see the latest spleen venting.

So, heck, here are some ideas if you want to do your own anti-page. You might even want to create a service. Name it **vent-spleen.com** and invite all the belly-achers of the world to voice their hatreds.

Suggestions:

1) Check with a lawyer to make sure what you're doing is legal! I suspect slander laws will eventually be enforced.

2) Document your complaints to excess. Say you've bought a lemon for a car and you want to embar-

In addition to his weekly syndicated radio call-in show, "Software/Hardtalk," syndicated newspaper columns, magazine writing for *MacUser*, *PC Computing*, *DEC Professional*, *Information Technology*, and his featured "*Inside Track*" column in *PC Magazine*, Dvorak is the author of several best-selling books,including *Dvorak's Inside Track to DOS & PC Performance*, *Dvorak's Guide to PC Telecommunications*, and *Dvorak's Inside Track to the Mac*.

rass Ford or GM. Put pictures of the car online. Outline the problems. Make JPEGs of the documents, etc. Throw everything at them.

3) Humor as a weapon. Get Adobe Photoshop and put the head of your enemy on the end of a rattlesnake and post it. If you're out to "get" an individual you may as well go with humiliating graphics.

4) Update the page with new pictures and more complaining as often as possible. Make it clear that the page is not stagnant.

5) Get the page linked to other pages somehow. Go into newsgroups and boost the page in various forums as something people should check out! Most users when reading a newsgroup will save the names of web sites that people say are interesting. With the lemon/car you could go into the auto discussion groups and post

*****BEFORE YOU BUY A HANDLEY V-12 READ THIS ***.**

These Grudge Pages are something we're going to have to live with, like it or not. ◆

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DVORAK'S RECIPE NOOK

London Broil Made Easy

There is one recipe that I probably cook more than any other. It's simple and easy. I call it London broil made easy. London broil is usually a flank steak broiled and thin sliced at an angle. Chateaubriand is another cut used to make London Broil, but most restaurants use flank steak. Someone 20 years ago gave me the trick to making it tender and tasty. I've never had London broil better than the way I cook it. The key is marinating the meat for 15-20 minutes in Kikkoman Soy Sauce — the stuff in a can made up in Walworth, Wisconsin. I buy a gallon at a time. I have tried variations on this simple trick to no avail. I have varied the marinade and tried different soy sauces. You will not get the same results with any other soy sauce. I've been making this dish for 20 years and have not been able to improve it except to add the Sumac which is not absolutely necessary.

Flank Steak
Cup of Kikkoman Soy Sauce
Sumac

This is one of those dishes that need to be timed. The meat should be rare but not undercooked. Overcooking flank steak makes it very tough as the meat has almost no fat marbling. You can broil it or barbecue it over mesquite. Either way it has to be done hot and fast. It's usually 5-10 minutes at the most total time. When you first do this recipe you may want to slice into the meat to assure yourself that it's cooked properly. You will lose juice though.

Start by buying a nice big flank steak — one of the most delicious cuts of meat, period. Lay it out in a baking pan and pour the soy sauce over it. Flip the meat over so it's coated. Flip it every five minutes. Do not marinade for more than 20 minutes as the meat will start to "cook" in the salty soy sauce and change its texture radically. Try this recipe after marinading a flank steak for an hour in this stuff to see what I'm talking about. It makes the meat quite weird. 15 minutes seems to be ideal.

Use a hot flame broiler or a hot barbecue. Electric broilers do not do the job as well. Ideally, you should be able to make the outer part of the meat a little crispy while maintaining a rare internal meat.

When you pull it off you should let it stand for 5-10 minutes so the juices will set. You slice it across the grain at a harsh 45-60 degree angle in thin slices. You arrange the slices on a plate and optionally shake some ground Sumac — a Mediterranean spice — over the meat. Sumac is a weird pod that they grind up to make this pepper-like powder that has a refreshing lemon flavor. Kids love it too. Make sure it's fresh because it loses its nice taste when it gets old.

Once you get the hang of cooking flank steak this way you'll have trouble cooking it any other way. I have tried and tried to find a better recipe for flank steak with no success. It's a lean delicious meat that few people eat because this is the only way to make it tender and I've never seen this recipe anywhere. Once you get the hang of this recipe I guarantee it will become standard fare in your household. Serve with basmati rice and salad. ◆

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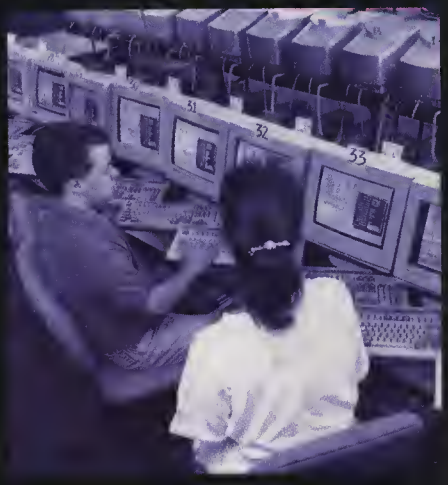

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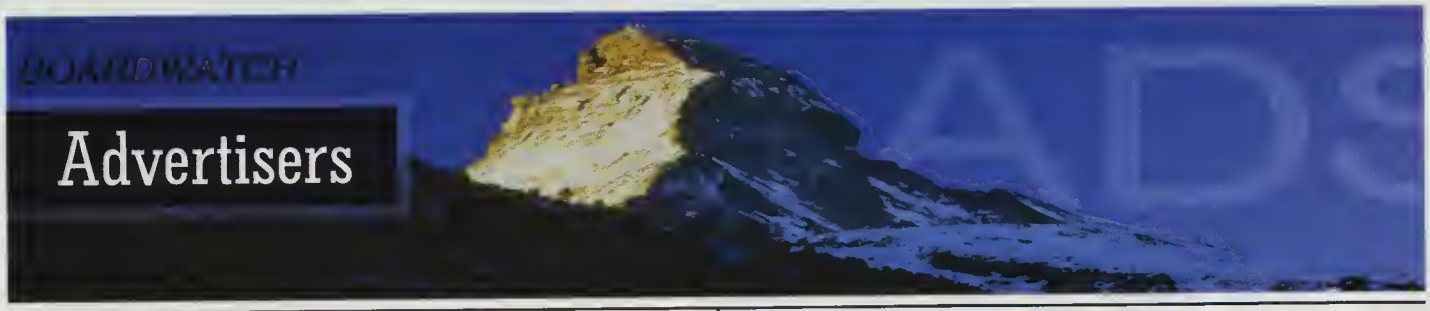

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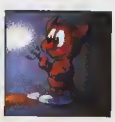

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